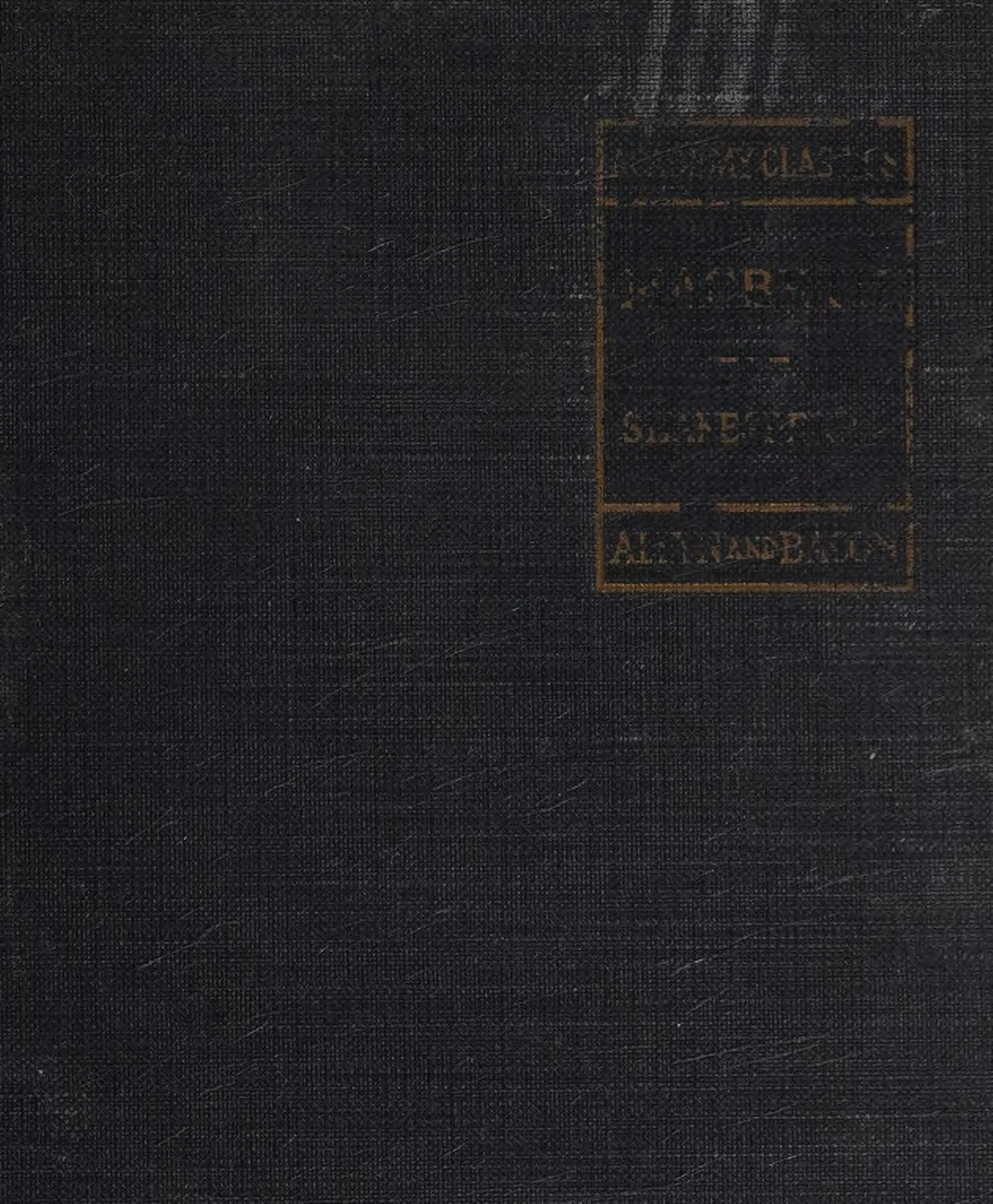

Charles. Bingham
H.R. 120.

LADY MACBETH.
ELLEN TERRY.

The Academy Classics

SHAKESPEARE

MACBETH

EDITED WITH A LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE, AN ACCOUNT OF THE THEATRE IN HIS TIME, AND NUMEROUS AIDS TO THE STUDY OF THE PLAY

BY

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ALLYN AND BACON

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FOREWORD

THIS new edition of Macbeth aims to present the tragedy not only as a piece of literature to be read, but as the acting play which Shakespeare wrote for the Globe Theatre. The editors have tried also to meet halfway — and in a human way — all the eager interest which students actually feel in studying *into* a Shakespeare tragedy. Some idea is given of the way Shakespeare worked, and of the way his work affected the people for whom he wrote,— among them ourselves, — for he is proved to-day, in every class-room where he is really loved, to be "not of an age, but for all time."

The notes have been made very full. Questions and comments for preparing the day's lesson and for class-room discussion are numerous. The sections on Tragic Destination in Macbeth, the Dramatic Construction of Macbeth, the Value of Character Contrast in Macbeth, and Verse and Prose in Macbeth are intended to bring out clearly the distinctive features that make Macbeth, next to Hamlet, the greatest of Shakespeare's tragedies — and even greater than Hamlet in sure construction and dynamic effect.

The present edition is for class study and does not pretend to any original research or scholarship. Numerous authorities have been consulted, Dr. Furness's Variorum Edition of Macbeth and Professor Moulton's *Shakespeare*

as a Dramatic Artist, being most often quoted. Yet, with all respect to scholarly authorities, this edition derives its chief value from the editors' experience in teaching Macbeth to classes whose appreciation and enthusiasm have made the preparation of this work a pleasure.

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"Not marble, not the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme,
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom."

MACBETH.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DUNCAN, king of Scotland.
MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, his sons.
MACBETH, BANQUO, Generals of the king's army.
MACDUFF, LENNOX, ROSS, MENTEITH, ANGUS, CAITHNESS, Noblemen of Scotland.
FLEANCE, son to Banquo.
SIWARD, Earl of Northumberland, general of the English forces.
Young SIWARD, his son.
SEYTON, an officer attending on Macbeth.
Boy, son to Macduff.

An English Doctor.
A Scotch Doctor.
A Soldier.
A Porter.
An Old Man.

LADY MACBETH.
LADY MACDUFF.
Gentlewoman attending on Lady Macbeth.
HECATE.
Three Witches.
Apparitions.

Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers, Attendants, and Messengers.

SCENE: *Scotland*; *England*.

When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

—Act I. Scene 1.

ACT I

SCENE I. *A desert place.*

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches.

First Witch. When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?
Sec. Witch. When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.
Third Witch. That will be ere the set of sun.
First Witch. Where the place?
Sec. Witch. Upon the heath.
Third Witch. There to meet with Macbeth.
First Witch. I come, Graymalkin!
Sec. Witch. Paddock calls.
Third Witch. Anon!
All. Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A camp near Forres.*

Alarum within. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, *with* Attendants, *meeting a bleeding* SERGEANT.

Dun. What bloody man is that? He can report,
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.
Mal. This is the sergeant
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!

Say to the king the knowledge of the broil
As thou didst leave it.
Ser. Doubtful it stood;
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald —
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
The multiplying villanies of nature
Do swarm upon him — from the western isles
Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied;
And fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,
Showed like a rebel's whore: but all 's too weak:
For brave Macbeth — well he deserves that name —
Disdaining fortune, with his brandished steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valor's minion carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave;
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseamed him from the nave to the chaps,
And fixed his head upon our battlements.
Dun. O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!
Ser. As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,
So from that spring whence comfort seemed to come
Discomfort swells. Mark, king of Scotland, mark:
No sooner justice had with valor armed
Compelled these skipping kerns to trust their heels,
But the Norweyan lord, surveying vantage,
With furbished arms and new supplies of men
Began a fresh assault.
Dun. Dismayed not this
Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

Ser. Yes;
As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
If I say sooth, I must report they were
As cannons overcharged with double cracks, so they
Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe:
Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
Or memorize another Golgotha,
I cannot tell —
But I am faint, my gashes cry for help.

Dun. So well thy words become thee as thy wounds;
They smack of honor both. Go get him surgeons.
[*Exit Sergeant, attended.*
Who comes here?

Enter Ross.

Mal. The worthy thane of Ross.

Len. What a haste looks through his eyes! So should he look
That seems to speak things strange.

Ross. God save the king!

Dun. Whence camest thou, worthy thane?

Ross. From Fife, great king;
Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky
And fan our people cold. Norway himself,
With terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
The thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict;
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapped in proof,
Confronted him with self-comparisons,
Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish spirit: and, to conclude,
The victory fell on us.

Dun. Great happiness!
Ross. That now
Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition;
Nor would we deign him burial of his men
Till he disbursed at St. Colme's inch
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.
Dun. No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive
Our bosom interest: go pronounce his present death,
And with his former title greet Macbeth.
Ross. I'll see it done.
Dun. What he hath lost noble Macbeth hath won.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *A heath near Forres.*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

First Witch. Where hast thou been, sister?
Sec. Witch. Killing swine.
Third Witch. Sister, where thou?
First Witch. A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And munched, and munched, and munched: — 'Give me,' quoth I:
'Aroint thee, witch!' the rump-fed ronyon cries.
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger:
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,
And, like a rat without a tail,
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.
Sec. Witch. I'll give thee a wind.
First Witch. Thou 'rt kind.
Third Witch. And I another.

First Witch. I myself have all the other,
And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I' the shipman's card.
I will drain him dry as hay:
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid;
He shall live a man forbid:
Weary se'nnights nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak and pine:
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost.
Look what I have.

Sec. Witch. Show me, show me.

First Witch. Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wrecked as homeward he did come. [*Drum within.*

Third Witch. A drum, a drum!
Macbeth doth come!

All. The weird sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about:
Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again, to make up nine.
Peace! the charm 's wound up!

Enter MACBETH *and* BANQUO.

Macb. So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

Ban. How far is 't called to Forres? What are these
So withered and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on 't? Live you? or are you aught

That man may question? You seem to understand me,
By each at once her chappy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips: you should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

Macb. Speak, if you can: what are you?

First Witch. All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

Sec. Witch. All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

Third Witch. All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!

Ban. Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of truth,
Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace and great prediction
Of noble having and of royal hope,
That he seems rapt withal: to me you speak not.
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear
Your favors nor your hate.

First Witch. Hail!

Sec. Witch. Hail!

Third Witch. Hail!

First Witch. Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

Sec. Witch. Not so happy, yet much happier.

Third Witch. Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:
So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them. Whither are they vanished?

— Act I. Scene 3.

First Witch. Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

Macb. Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more:
By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis;
But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,
A prosperous gentleman; and to be king
Stands not within the prospect of belief,
No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence
You owe this strange intelligence? or why
Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you.
[*Witches vanish.*

Ban. The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them. Whither are they vanished?

Macb. Into the air; and what seemed corporal melted
As breath into the wind. Would they had stayed!

Ban. Were such things here as we do speak about?
Or have we eaten on the insane root
That takes the reason prisoner?

Macb. Your children shall be kings.

Ban. You shall be king.

Macb. And thane of Cawdor too: went it not so?

Ban. To the selfsame tune and words. Who 's here?

Enter Ross *and* Angus.

Ross. The king hath happily received, Macbeth,
The news of thy success; and when he reads
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,
His wonders and his praises do contend
Which should be thine or his: silenced with that,
In viewing o'er the rest o' the selfsame day,
He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,

Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,
Strange images of death. As thick as hail
Came post with post; and every one did bear
Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,
And poured them down before him.
Ang. We are sent
To give thee from our royal master thanks;
Only to herald thee into his sight,
Not pay thee.
Ross. And, for an earnest of a greater honor,
He bade me, from him, call thee Thane of Cawdor:
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane!
For it is thine.
Ban. [*Aside*] What, can the devil speak true?
Macb. The thane of Cawdor lives: why do you dress me
In borrowed robes?
Ang. Who was the thane lives yet;
But under heavy judgment bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combined
With those of Norway, or did line the rebel
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
He labored in his country's wreck, I know not;
But treasons capital, confessed and proved,
Have overthrown him.
Macb. [*Aside*] Glamis, and thane of Cawdor!
The greatest is behind. [*To Ross and Angus*] Thanks for your pains.
[*To Ban.*] Do you not hope your children shall be kings,
When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me
Promised no less to them?

Ban. That trusted home
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,
Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 't is strange:
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray 's
In deepest consequence.
Cousins, a word, I pray you.
Macb. [*Aside*] Two truths are told,
As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme. — I thank you, gentlemen.
[*Aside*] This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill, cannot be good: if ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth? I am thane of Cawdor:
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings:
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single state of man that function
Is smothered in surmise, and nothing is
But what is not.
Ban. Look, how our partner's rapt.
Macb. [*Aside*] If chance will have me king, why chance may crown me,
Without my stir.
Ban. New honors come upon him,
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould
But with the aid of use.

Macb. [*Aside*] Come what come may,
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.
Ban. Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.
Macb. Give me your favor: my dull brain was wrought
With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains
Are registered where every day I turn
The leaf to read them. Let us toward the king.
Think upon what hath chanced, and, at more time,
The interim having weighed it, let us speak
Our free hearts each to other.
Ban. Very gladly.
Macb. Till then, enough. Come, friends. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. *Forres. The palace.*

Flourish. Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox, *and* Attendants.

Dun. Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not
Those in commission yet returned?
Mal. My liege,
They are not yet come back. But I have spoke
With one that saw him die: who did report
That very frankly he confessed his treasons,
Implored your highness' pardon and set forth
A deep repentance: nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it; he died
As one that had been studied in his death
To throw away the dearest thing he owed,
As 't were a careless trifle.
Dun. There 's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face:

He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.

Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, *and* ANGUS.

O worthiest cousin!
The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me: thou art so far before
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserved,
That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine! only I have left to say,
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

Macb. The service and the loyalty I owe,
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part
Is to receive our duties; and our duties
Are to your throne and state children and servants,
Which do but what they should, by doing every thing
Safe toward your love and honor.

Dun. Welcome hither:
I have begun to plant thee, and will labor
To make thee full of growing. Noble Banquo,
That hast no less deserved, nor must be known
No less to have done so, let me infold thee
And hold thee to my heart.

Ban. There if I grow,
The harvest is your own.

Dun. My plenteous joys,
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow. Sons, kinsmen, thanes,
And you whose places are the nearest, know

We will establish our estate upon
Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter
The Prince of Cumberland; which honor must
Not unaccompanied invest him only,
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine
On all deservers. From hence to Inverness,
And bind us further to you.

Macb. The rest is labor, which is not used for you:
I 'll be myself the harbinger and make joyful
The hearing of my wife with your approach;
So humbly take my leave.

Dun. My worthy Cawdor!

Macb. [*Aside*] The Prince of Cumberland! that is a step
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;
Let not light see my black and deep desires:
The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be,
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see. [*Exit.*

Dun. True, worthy Banquo; he is full so valiant
And in his commendations I am fed;
It is a banquet to me. Let 's after him.
Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome:
It is a peerless kinsman. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*

Scene V. *Inverness. Macbeth's castle.*

Enter Lady Macbeth, *reading a letter.*

Lady M. 'They met me in the day of success; and I have learned by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into

LADY MACBETH
HELENA MODJESKA

Hie thee hither.
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear.
— Act I. Scene 5.

which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the king, who all-hailed me "Thane of Cawdor;" by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with "Hail, king that shalt be!" This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell.'

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be
What thou art promised: yet do I fear thy nature;
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way: thou wouldst be great;
Art not without ambition, but without
The illness should attend it: what thou wouldst highly,
That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,
And yet wouldst wrongly win: thou'ldst have, great Glamis,
That which cries 'Thus thou must do, if thou have it;'
And that which rather thou dost fear to do
Than wishest should be undone. Hie thee hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;
And chastise with the valor of my tongue
All that impedes thee from the golden round,
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
To have thee crowned withal.

Enter a Messenger.

What is your tidings?

Mess. The king comes here to-night.

Lady M. Thou 'rt mad to say it!
Is not thy master with him? who, were 't so,
Would have informed for preparation?

Mess. So please you, it is true: our thane is coming:
One of my fellows had the speed of him,
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
Than would make up his message.

Lady M. Give him tending;
He brings great news. [*Exit Messenger.*
The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;
Stop up th' access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry 'Hold, hold!'

Enter MACBETH.

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
Thy letters have transported me beyond

This ignorant present, and I feel now
The future in the instant.
Macb. My dearest love,
Duncan comes here to-night.
Lady M. And when goes hence?
Macb. To-morrow, as he purposes.
Lady M. O, never
Shall sun that morrow see!
Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters. To beguile the time,
Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue: look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under 't. He that 's coming
Must be provided for: and you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch;
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.
Macb. We will speak further.
Lady M. Only look up clear;
To alter favor ever is to fear:
Leave all the rest to me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Before Macbeth's castle.*

Hautboys and torches. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, *and* Attendants.

Dun. This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.
Ban. This guest of summer,

The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,
By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here: no jutty, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle:
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed,
The air is delicate.

Enter LADY MACBETH.

Dun. See, see, our honored hostess!
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you
How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.

Lady M. All our service
In every point twice done and then done double
Were poor and single business to contend
Against those honors deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house: for those of old,
And the late dignities heaped up to them,
We rest your hermits.

Dun. Where 's the thane of Cawdor?
We coursed him at the heels, and had a purpose
To be his purveyor: but he rides well;
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,
We are your guest to-night.

Lady M. Your servants ever
Have theirs, themselves and what is theirs, in compt,
To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
Still to return your own.

Dun. Give me your hand;
Conduct me to mine host: we love him highly,
And shall continue our graces towards him.
By your leave, hostess [*Exeunt.*

Scene VII. *Macbeth's castle.*

Hautboys and torches. Enter a Sewer, *and divers* Servants *with dishes and service, and pass over the stage. Then enter* Macbeth.

Macb. If it were done when 't is done, then 't were well
It were done quickly: if th' assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We 'ld jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgment here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice
Commends th' ingredients of our poisoned chalice
To our own lips. He 's here in double trust;
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,

Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the other.

Enter LADY MACBETH.

How now! what news?

Lady M. He has almost supped: why have you left the chamber?

Macb. Hath he asked for me?

Lady M. Know you not he has?

Macb. We will proceed no further in this business:
He hath honored me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

Lady M. Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dressed yourself? hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valor
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would,'
Like the poor cat i' the adage?

Macb. Prithee, peace:

Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valor
As thou art in desire?

—Act I. Scene 7.

I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none.
Lady M. What beast was 't, then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 't is to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.
Macb. If we should fail?
Lady M. We fail.
But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we 'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep —
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him — his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassail so convince
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbeck only: when in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?
Macb. Bring forth men-children only;

For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males. Will it not be received,
When we have marked with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber and used their very daggers,
That they have done 't?
Lady M. Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamor roar
Upon his death?
Macb. I am settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show:
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Court of Macbeth's castle.*

Enter BANQUO, *and* FLEANCE *bearing a torch before him.*

Ban. How goes the night, boy?
Fle. The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.
Ban. And she goes down at twelve.
Fle. I take 't, 't is later, sir.
Ban. Hold, take my sword. There 's husbandry in heaven;
Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep: merciful powers,
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose!

Enter MACBETH, *and a* Servant *with a torch.*

Give me my sword.
Who 's there?

Macb. A friend.

Ban. What, sir, not yet at rest? The king 's a-bed:
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great largess to your offices.
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess; and shut up
In measureless content.

Macb. Being unprepared,
Our will became the servant to defect;
Which else should free have wrought.

Ban. All 's well.
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:
To you they have showed some truth.

Macb. I think not of them:
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time.

Ban. At your kind'st leisure.

Macb. If you shall cleave to my consent, when 't is,
It shall make honor for you.

Ban. So I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,
I shall be counselled.

Macb. Good repose the while!

Ban. Thanks, sir: the like to you!

[*Exeunt Banquo and Fleance.*

Macb. Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.
[*Exit Servant.*
Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest; I see thee still,
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before. There 's no such thing:
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half-world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtained sleep; witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings, and withered murder,
Alarumed by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl 's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabout,
And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives:

Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.
[*A bell rings.*
I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell. [*Exit.*

Scene II. *The same.*

Enter Lady Macbeth.

Lady M. That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold;
What hath quenched them hath given me fire. Hark! Peace!
It was the owl that shrieked, the fatal bellman,
Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it:
The doors are open; and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores: I have drugged their possets,
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.
Macb. [*Within*] Who 's there? what, ho!
Lady M. Alack, I am afraid they have awaked,
And 't is not done. The attempt and not the deed
Confounds us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready;
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done 't.

Enter Macbeth.

My husband!
Macb. I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?

Lady M. I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.
Did not you speak?
Macb. When?
Lady M. Now.
Macb. As I descended?
Lady M. Ay.
Macb. Hark!
Who lies i' the second chamber?
Lady M. Donalbain.
Macb. This is a sorry sight.
[*Looking on his hands.*
Lady M. A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.
Macb. There 's one did laugh in 's sleep, and one cried
'Murder!'
That they did wake each other: I stood and heard them:
But they did say their prayers, and addressed them
Again to sleep.
Lady M. There are two lodged together.
Macb. One cried 'God bless us!' and 'Amen' the
other;
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.
Listening their fear, I could not say 'Amen,'
When they did say 'God bless us!'
Lady M. Consider it not so deeply.
Macb. But wherefore could not I pronounce 'Amen'?
I had most need of blessing, and 'Amen'
Stuck in my throat.
Lady M. These deeds must not be thought
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.
Macb. Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no
more!

Infirm of purpose!
Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures —

—Act II. Scene 2.

Macbeth does murder sleep,' the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleave of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast, —

Lady M. What do you mean?

Macb. Still it cried ' Sleep no more ! ' to all the house :
' Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more.'

Lady M. Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength, to think
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there: go carry them; and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.

Macb. I 'll go no more:
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on 't again I dare not.

Lady M. Infirm of purpose!
Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures: 't is the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I 'll gild the faces of the grooms withal;
For it must seem their guilt. [*Exit. Knocking within.*

Macb. Whence is that knocking?
How is 't with me, when every noise appals me?
What hands are here? ha! they pluck out mine eyes.
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather

The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

Re-enter LADY MACBETH.

Lady M. My hands are of your color; but I shame
To wear a heart so white. [*Knocking within.*] I hear a knocking
At the south entry: retire we to our chamber:
A little water clears us of this deed:
How easy is it, then! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended. [*Knocking within.*] Hark! more knocking.
Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us,
And show us to be watchers. Be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.

Macb. To know my deed, 't were best not know myself. [*Knocking within.*
Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The same.*

Knocking within. Enter a Porter.

Porter. Here 's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of hell-gate, he should have old turning the key. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who 's there, i' the name of Beelzebub? Here 's a farmer, that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty: come in time; have napkins enow about you; here you 'll sweat for 't. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock! Who 's there, in the other devil's name? Faith, here 's an equiv-

ocator, that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven: O, come in, equivocator. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an English tailor come hither, for stealing out of a French hose: come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock; never at quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire. [*Knocking within.*] Anon, anon! I pray you, remember the porter. [*Opens the gate.*

Enter MACDUFF *and* LENNOX.

Macd. Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,
That you do lie so late?

Port. 'Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock.

Macd. Is thy master stirring?

Enter MACBETH.

Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.

Len. Good morrow, noble sir.

Macb. Good morrow, both.

Macd. Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

Macb. Not yet.

Macd. He did command me to call timely on him:
I have almost slipped the hour.

Macb. I'll bring you to him.

Macd. I know this is a joyful trouble to you;
But yet 't is one.
Macb. The labor we delight in physics pain.
This is the door.
Macd. I 'll make so bold to call,
For 't is my limited service. [*Exit.*
Len. Goes the king hence to-day?
Macb. He does: he did appoint so.
Len. The night has been unruly: where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of death,
And prophesying with accents terrible
Of dire combustion and confused events
New hatched to the woeful time: the obscure bird
Clamored the livelong night: some say, the earth
Was feverous and did shake.
Macb. 'T was a rough night.
Len. My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it.

Re-enter MACDUFF.

Macd. O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee!
Macb. } What's the matter?
Len. }
Macd. Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' the building!
Macb. What is 't you say? the life?
Len. Mean you his majesty?

Macd. Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon: do not bid me speak;
See, and then speak yourselves.
[*Exeunt Macbeth and Lennox.*
Awake, awake!
Ring the alarum-bell. Murder and treason!
Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake!
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
And look on death itself! up, up, and see
The great doom's image! Malcolm! Banquo!
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
To countenance this horror! Ring the bell.
[*Bell rings.*

Enter LADY MACBETH.

Lady M. What 's the business,
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley
The sleepers of the house? speak, speak!
Macd. O gentle lady
'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak;
The repetition, in a woman's ear,
Would murder as it fell.

Enter BANQUO.

O Banquo, Banquo,
Our royal master 's murdered!
Lady M. Woe, alas!
What, in our house?
Ban. Too cruel any where.
Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,
And say it is not so.

Re-enter MACBETH *and* LENNOX *with* ROSS.

Macb. Had I but died an hour before this chance,
I had lived a blessed time; for, from this instant,
There 's nothing serious in mortality:
All is but toys: renown and grace is dead;
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.

Enter MALCOLM *and* DONALBAIN.

Don. What is amiss?
Macb. You are, and do not know 't:
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopped; the very source of it is stopped.
Macd. Your royal father 's murdered.
Mal. O, by whom?
Len. Those of his chamber, as it seemed, had done 't:
Their hands and faces were all badged with blood;
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found
Upon their pillows:
They stared, and were distracted; no man's life
Was to be trusted with them.
Macb. O, yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.
Macd. Wherefore did you so?
Macb. Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:
The expedition of my violent love
Outrun the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,

His silver skin laced with his golden blood;
And his gashed stabs looked like a breach in nature
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,
Steeped in the colors of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breeched with gore: who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make 's love known?

Lady M. Help me hence, ho!

Macd. Look to the lady.

Mal. [*Aside to Don.*] Why do we hold our tongues,
That most may claim this argument for ours?

Don. [*Aside to Mal.*] What should be spoken here, where our fate,
Hid in an auger-hole, may rush, and seize us?
Let 's away;
Our tears are not yet brewed.

Mal. [*Aside to Don.*] Nor our strong sorrow
Upon the foot of motion.

Ban. Look to the lady:

[*Lady Macbeth is carried out.*

And when we have our naked frailties hid,
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work,
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us:
In the great hand of God I stand; and thence
Against the undivulged pretence I fight
Of treasonous malice.

Macd. And so do I.

All. So all.

Macb. Let 's briefly put on manly readiness,
And meet i' the hall together.

All. Well contented.

[*Exeunt all but Malcolm and Donalbain.*

Mal. What will you do? Let 's not consort with them:
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy. I 'll to England.

Don. To Ireland, I; our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer: where we are,
There 's daggers in men's smiles: the near in blood,
The nearer bloody.

Mal. This murderous shaft that 's shot
Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,
But shift away: there 's warrant in that theft
Which steals itself, when there 's no mercy left

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Outside Macbeth's castle.*

Enter ROSS *and an* old Man.

Old M. Threescore and ten I can remember well:
Within the volume of which time I have seen
Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore night
Hath trifled former knowings.

Ross. Ah, good father,
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,
Threaten his bloody stage: by the clock, 't is day,
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp:
Is 't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,
When living light should kiss it?

Old M. 'T is unnatural,
Even like the deed that 's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.
Ross. And Duncan's horses — a thing most strange and certain —
Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,
Turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make
War with mankind.
Old M. 'T is said they eat each other.
Ross. They did so, to the amazement of mine eyes
That looked upon 't. Here comes the good Macduff.

Enter MACDUFF.

How goes the world, sir, now?
Macd. Why, see you not?
Ross. Is 't known who did this more than bloody deed?
Macd. Those that Macbeth hath slain.
Ross. Alas, the day!
What good could they pretend?
Macd. They were suborned:
Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stolen away and fled; which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed.
Ross. 'Gainst nature still!
Thriftless ambition, that wilt ravin up
Thine own life's means! Then 't is most like
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.

Macd. He is already named, and gone to Scone
To be invested.
Ross. Where is Duncan's body?
Macd. Carried to Colmekill,
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones.
Ross. Will you to Scone?
Macd. No, cousin, I 'll to Fife.
Ross. Well, I will thither.
Macd. Well, may you see things well done there: adieu!
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!
Ross. Farewell, father.
Old M. God's benison go with you; and with those
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Forres. The palace.*

Enter BANQUO.

Ban. Thou hast it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
As the weird women promised, and, I fear,
Thou playedst most foully for 't: yet it was said
It should not stand in thy posterity,
But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them —
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine —
Why, by the verities on thee made good,
May they not be my oracles as well,
And set me up in hope? But hush! no more.

Sennet sounded. Enter MACBETH, *as king*, LADY MACBETH, *as queen*, LENNOX, ROSS, Lords, Ladies, *and* Attendants.

Macb. Here 's our chief guest.
Lady M. If he had been forgotten,
It had been as a gap in our great feast,
And all-thing unbecoming.
Macb. To-night we hold a solemn supper, sir,
And I 'll request your presence.
Ban. Let your highness
Command upon me; to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
For ever knit.
Macb. Ride you this afternoon?
Ban. Ay, my good lord.
Macb. We should have else desired your good advice,
Which still hath been both grave and prosperous,
In this day's council; but we 'll take to-morrow.
Is 't far you ride?
Ban. As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
'Twixt this and supper: go not my horse the better,
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour or twain.
Macb. Fail not our feast.
Ban. My lord, I will not.
Macb. We hear, our bloody cousins are bestowed
In England and in Ireland, not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention: but of that to-morrow,
When therewithal we shall have cause of state

Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse: adieu,
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?
Ban. Ay, my good lord: our time does call upon 's.
Macb. I wish your horses swift and sure of foot.
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell. [*Exit Banquo.*
Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night: to make society
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
Till supper-time alone: while then, God be with you!
[*Exeunt all but Macbeth, and an attendant.*
Sirrah, a word with you: attend those men
Our pleasure?
Atten. They are, my lord, without the palace gate.
Macb. Bring them before us. [*Exit Attendant.*
To be thus is nothing;
But to be safely thus. — Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be feared: 't is much he dares;
And. to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valor
To act in safety. There is none but he
Whose being I do fear: and, under him,
My Genius is rebuked; as, it is said,
Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the sisters
When first they put the name of king upon me,
And bade them speak to him: then prophet-like
They hailed him father to a line of kings:
Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand,

No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind;
For them the gracious Duncan have I murdered;
Put rancors in the vessel of my peace
Only for them; and mine eternal jewel
Given to the common enemy of man,
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings!
Rather than so, come fate into the list,
And champion me to the utterance! Who 's there?

Re-enter Attendant, *with two* Murderers.

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.
[*Exit Attendant.*
Was it not yesterday we spoke together?
First Mur. It was, so please your highness.
Macb. Well then, now
Have you considered of my speeches? Know
That it was he in the times past which held you
So under fortune, which you thought had been
Our innocent self: this I made good to you
In our last conference, passed in probation with you,
How you were borne in hand, how crossed, the instruments,
Who wrought with them, and all things else that might
To half a soul and to a notion crazed
Say 'Thus did Banquo.'
First Mur. You made it known to us.
Macb. I did so, and went further, which is now
Our point of second meeting. Do you find
Your patience so predominant in your nature
That you can let this go? Are you so gospelled

To pray for this good man and for his issue,
Whose heavy hand hath bowed you to the grave
And beggared yours for ever?
First Mur. We are men, my liege.
Macb. Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs and demi-wolves, are clept
All by the name of dogs: the valued file
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The housekeeper, the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him closed; whereby he does receive
Particular addition, from the bill
That writes them all alike: and so of men.
Now, if you have a station in the file,
Not i' the worst rank of manhood, say 't;
And I will put that business in your bosoms,
Whose execution takes your enemy off,
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death were perfect.
Sec. Mur. I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incensed that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.
First Mur. And I another
So weary with disasters, tugged with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it, or be rid on 't.
Macb. Both of you
Know Banquo was your enemy.

And I will put that business in your bosoms,
Whose execution takes your enemy off.

Act III. Scene 1.

Both Mur. True, my lord.
Macb. So is he mine; and in such bloody distance,
That every minute of his being thrusts
Against my near'st of life: and though I could
With barefaced power sweep him from my sight
And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not,
For certain friends that are both his and mine,
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall
Who I myself struck down; and thence it is,
That I to your assistance do make love,
Masking the business from the common eye
For sundry weighty reasons.
Sec. Mur. We shall, my lord,
Perform what you command us.
First Mur. Though our lives —
Macb. Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour at most
I will advise you where to plant yourselves;
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time,
The moment on 't; for 't must be done to-night,
And something from the palace; always thought
That I require a clearness: and with him —
To leave no rubs nor blotches in the work —
Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
Whose absence is no less material to me
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart:
I 'll come to you anon.
Both Mur. We are resolved, my lord.
Macb. I 'll call upon you straight: abide within.
[*Exeunt Murderers.*

It is concluded. Banquo, thy soul's flight,
If it find heaven, must find it out to-night. [*Exit.*

Scene II. *The palace.*

Enter Lady Macbeth *and a* Servant.

Lady M. Is Banquo gone from court?

Serv. Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.

Lady M. Say to the king, I would attend his leisure
For a few words.

Serv. Madam, I will. [*Exit.*

Lady M. Nought's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content:
'T is safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

Enter Macbeth.

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died
With them they think on? Things without all remedy
Should be without regard: what 's done is done.

Macb. We have scotched the snake, not killed it:
She 'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly: better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,

Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,
Can touch him further.
Lady M. Come on;
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks;
Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.
Macb. So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you:
Let your remembrance apply to Banquo;
Present him eminence, both with eye and tongue:
Unsafe the while, that we
Must lave our honors in these flattering streams,
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,
Disguising what they are.
Lady M. You must leave this.
Macb. O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!
Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.
Lady M. But in them nature's copy 's not eterne.
Macb. There 's comfort yet; they are assailable;
Then be thou jocund: ere the bat hath flown
His cloistered flight, ere to black Hecate's summons
The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.
Lady M. What 's to be done?
Macb. Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;
And with thy bloody and invisible hand

Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens; and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood:
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.
Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee still:
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.
So, prithee, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. A *park near the palace.*

Enter three Murderers.

First Mur. But who did bid thee join with us?
Third Mur. Macbeth.
Sec. Mur. He needs not our mistrust, since he delivers
Our offices and what we have to do
To the direction just.
First Mur. Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day:
Now spurs the lated traveller apace
To gain the timely inn; and near approaches
The subject of our watch.
Third Mur. Hark! I hear horses.
Ban. [*Within*] Give us a light there, ho!
Sec. Mur. Then 't is he: the rest
That are within the note of expectation
Already are i' the court.
First Mur. His horses go about.
Third Mur. Almost a mile: but he does usually,

So all men do, from hence to the palace gate
Make it their walk.
Sec. Mur. A light, a light!

Enter BANQUO, *and* FLEANCE *with a torch.*

Third Mur. 'T is he.
First Mur. Stand to 't.
Ban. It will be rain to-night.
First Mur. Let it come down.
[*They set upon Banquo.*
Ban. O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
Thou mayst revenge. O slave! [*Dies. Fleance escapes.*
Third Mur. Who did strike out the light?
First Mur. Was 't not the way?
Third Mur. There 's but one down; the son is fled.
Sec. Mur. We have lost
Best half of our affair.
First Mur. Well, let 's away, and say how much is done. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The same. Hall in the palace.*

A banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSS, LENNOX, Lords, *and* Attendants.

Macb. You know your own degrees; sit down: at first
And last the hearty welcome.
Lords. Thanks to your majesty.
Macb. Ourself will mingle with society,
And play the humble host.

Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time
We will require her welcome.
Lady M. Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends;
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

First Murderer *appears at the door.*

Macb. See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.
Both sides are even: here I 'll sit i' the midst:
Be large in mirth; anon we 'll drink a measure
The table round. [*Approaching the door.*] There 's blood upon thy face.
Mur. 'T is Banquo's then.
Macb. 'T is better thee without than he within.
Is he dispatched?
Mur. My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.
Macb. Thou art the best o' the cut-throats: yet he 's good
That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it,
Thou art the nonpareil.
Mur. Most royal sir,
Fleance is 'scaped.
Macb. Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect,
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,
As broad and general as the casing air:
But now I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo 's safe?
Mur. Ay, my good lord: safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched gashes on his head;
The least a death to nature.

Macb. Thanks for that:
There the grown serpent lies; the worm that 's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,
No teeth for the present. Get thee gone: to-morrow
We 'll hear ourselves again. [*Exit Murderer.*
Lady M. My royal lord,
You do not give the cheer: the feast is sold
That is not often vouched, while 't is a-making,
'T is given with welcome: to feed were best at home;
From thence the sauce to meat is ceremony:
Meeting were bare without it.
Macb. Sweet remembrancer!
Now, good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both!
Len. May 't please your highness sit.

[*The Ghost of Banquo enters, and sits in Macbeth's place.*]

Macb. Here had we now our country's honor roofed,
Were the graced person of our Banquo present;
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness
Than pity for mischance!
Ross. His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please 't your highness
To grace us with your royal company.
Macb. The table 's full.
Len. Here is a place reserved, sir.
Macb. Where?
Len. Here, my good lord. What is 't that moves your highness?

Macb. Which of you have done this?
Lords. What, my good lord?
Macb. Thou canst not say I did it: never shake
Thy gory locks at me.
Ross. Gentlemen, rise; his highness is not well.
Lady M. Sit, worthy friends: my lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth: pray you, keep seat;
The fit is momentary; upon a thought
He will again be well: if much you note him,
You shall offend him and extend his passion:
Feed, and regard him not. Are you a man?
Macb. Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.
Lady M. O proper stuff!
This is the very painting of your fear:
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,
Impostors to true fear, would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all 's done,
You look but on a stool.
Macb. Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo! how say you?
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.
If charnel-houses and our graves must send
Those that we bury back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites. [*Ghost vanishes.*
Lady M. What, quite unmanned in folly?
Macb. If I stand here, I saw him.

Thou canst not say I did it: never shake
Thy gory locks at me.

— Act III. Scene 4.

Lady M. Fie, for shame!

Macb. Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden time,
Ere human statute purged the gentle weal;
Ay, and since too, murders have been performed
Too terrible for the ear: the times have been,
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end; but now they rise again,
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our stools: this is more strange
Than such a murder is.

Lady M. My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.

Macb. I do forget.
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends;
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all
Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine; fill full.
I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;
Would he were here! to all, and him, we thirst,
And all to all.

Lords. Our duties, and the pledge.

Re-enter Ghost.

Macb. Avaunt! and quit my sight! let the earth hide thee!
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with!

Lady M. Think of this, good peers,

But as a thing of custom: 't is no other;
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.
Macb. What man dare, I dare:
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The armed rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble: or be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal mockery, hence! [*Ghost vanishes.*
Why, so: being gone,
I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.
Lady M. You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,
With most admired disorder.
Macb. Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder? You make me strange
Even to the disposition that I owe,
When now I think you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine is blanched with fear.
Ross. What sights, my lord?
Lady M. I pray you, speak not; he grows worse and worse;
Question enrages him. At once, good night:
Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once.
Len. Good night; and better health
Attend his majesty!

Lady M. A kind good night to all!

[*Exeunt all but Macbeth and Lady M.*

Macb. It will have blood; they say, blood will have blood:
Stones have been known to move and trees to speak;
Augurs and understood relations have
By magot-pies and choughs and rooks brought forth
The secret'st man of blood. What is the night?

Lady M. Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

Macb. How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his person
At our great bidding?

Lady M. Did you send to him, sir?

Macb. I hear it by the way; but I will send:
There 's not a one of them but in his house
I keep a servant feed. I will to-morrow,
And betimes I will, to the weird sisters:
More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,
By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good,
All causes shall give way: I am in blood
Stepped in so far that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er:
Strange things I have in head, that will to hand;
Which must be acted ere they may be scanned.

Lady M. You lack the season of all natures, sleep.

Macb. Come, we 'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse
Is the initiate fear that wants hard use:
We are yet but young in deed. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V. *A Heath.*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches *meeting* Hecate.

First Witch. Why, how now, Hecate! you look angerly.

Hec. Have I not reason, beldams as you are,
Saucy and overbold? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close contriver of all harms,
Was never called to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art?
And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now: get you gone,
And at the pit of Acheron
Meet me i' the morning: thither he
Will come to know his destiny:
Your vessels and your spells provide,
Your charms and every thing beside.
I am for the air: this night I 'll spend
Unto a dismal and a fatal end:
Great business must be wrought ere noon:
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vaporous drop profound;
I 'll catch it ere it comes to ground:
And that distilled by magic sleights
Shall raise such artificial sprites

As by the strength of their illusion
Shall draw him on to his confusion:
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace and fear:
And you all know, security
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

[*Music and a song within*: 'Come away, come away,' &c.

Hark! I am called; my little spirit, see,
Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me. [*Exit.*

First Witch. Come, let 's make haste; she 'll soon be back again. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI. *Forres. The palace.*

Enter Lennox *and another* Lord.

Len. My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret further: only, I say,
Things have been strangely borne. The gracious Duncan
Was pitied of Macbeth: marry, he was dead:
And the right-valiant Banquo walked too late;
Whom, you may say, if 't please you, Fleance killed,
For Fleance fled: men must not walk too late.
Who cannot want the thought how monstrous
It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
To kill their gracious father? damned fact!
How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight
In pious rage the two delinquents tear,
That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep?
Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;
For 't would have angered any heart alive

To hear the men deny 't. So that, I say,
He has borne all things well: and I do think
That had he Duncan's sons under his key —
As, an 't please heaven, he shall not — they should find
What 't were to kill a father; so should Fleance.
But, peace! for from broad words and 'cause he failed
His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear
Macduff lives in disgrace: sir, can you tell
Where he bestows himself?
Lord. The son of Duncan,
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,
Lives in the English court, and is received
Of the most pious Edward with such grace
That the malevolence of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect: thither Macduff
Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid
To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward:
That, by the help of these — with Him above
To ratify the work — we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,
Do faithful homage and receive free honors:
All which we pine for now: and this report
Hath so exasperate the king that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.
Len. Sent he to Macduff?
Lord. He did: and with an absolute 'Sir, not I,'
The cloudy messenger turns me his back,
And hums, as who should say 'You 'll rue the time
That clogs me with this answer.'
Len. And that well might

Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England and unfold
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country
Under a hand accursed!
Lord. I'll send my prayers with him.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A cavern. In the middle, a boiling cauldron. Thunder. Enter the three* Witches.

First Witch. Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed.
Sec. Witch. Thrice and once the hedge-pig whined.
Third Witch. Harpier cries, 'T is time, 't is time.'
First Witch. Round about the cauldron go;
In the poisoned entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty one
Sweltered venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.
All. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.
Sec. Witch. Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and owlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

All. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.
Third Witch. Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches' mummy, maw and gulf
Of the ravined salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digged i' the dark,
Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall of goat, and slips of yew
Slivered in the moon's eclipse,
Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,
Finger of birth-strangled babe
Ditch-delivered by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab:
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,
For the ingredients of our cauldron.
All. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.
Sec. Witch. Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

Enter HECATE *to the other three Witches.*

Hec. Oh, well done! I commend your pains;
And every one shall share i' the gains:
And now about the cauldron sing,
Like elves and fairies in a ring,
Enchanting all that you put in.
[*Music and a song:* 'Black spirits,' &c.
[*Hecate retires.*
Sec. Witch. By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.

How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
What is 't you do?

— Act IV. Scene 1.

Open, locks,
Whoever knocks.

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
What is 't you do?
All. A deed without a name.
Macb. I conjure you, by that which you profess,
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me:
Though you untie the winds and let them fight
Against the churches; though the yesty waves
Confound and swallow navigation up;
Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads;
Though palaces and pyramids do slope
Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure
Of nature's germens tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken; answer me
To what I ask you.
First Witch. Speak.
Sec. Witch. Demand.
Third Witch. We 'll answer.
First Witch. Say, if thou 'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters?
Macb. Call 'em; let me see 'em.
First Witch. Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten
Her nine farrow; grease that 's sweaten
From the murderer's gibbet throw
Into the flame.

All. Come, high or low;
Thyself and office deftly show!

Thunder. First Apparition: *an armed Head.*

Macb. Tell me, thou unknown power, —
First Witch. He knows thy thought:
Hear his speech, but say thou nought.
First App. Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware Macduff;
Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.
[*Descends.*
Macb. Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks;
Thou hast harped my fear aright: but one word more, —
First Witch. He will not be commanded: here's another,
More potent than the first.
Thunder. Second Apparition: *a bloody Child.*
Sec. App. Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!
Macb. Had I three ears, I 'ld hear thee.
Sec. App. Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn
The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth. [*Descends.*
Macb. Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?
But yet I 'll make assurance double sure,
And take a bond of fate: thou shalt not live;
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.

Thunder. Third Apparition: *a Child crowned, with a tree in his hand.*

What is this

That rises like the issue of a king,
And wears upon his baby-brow the round
And top of sovereignty?

All. Listen, but speak not to 't.

Third App. Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:
Macbeth shall never vanquished be until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him. [*Descends.*

Macb. That will never be:
Who can impress the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements! good!
Rebellion's head rise never till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath
To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your art
Can tell so much: shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

All. Seek to know no more.

Macb. I will be satisfied: deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.
Why sinks that cauldron? and what noise is this?
[*Hautboys.*

First Witch. Show!

Sec. Witch. Show!

Third Witch. Show!

All. Show his eyes, and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows, so depart!

A show of Eight Kings, *the last with a glass in his hand; Banquo's Ghost following.*

Macb. Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!
Thy crown does sear mine eye-balls. And thy hair,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.
A third is like the former. Filthy hags!
Why do you show me this? A fourth! Start, eyes!
What, will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?
Another yet! A seventh! I 'll see no more:
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass
Which shows me many more; and some I see
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry:
Horrible sight! Now, I see, 't is true;
For the blood-boltered Banquo smiles upon me,
And points at them for his. [*Apparitions vanish.*] What, is this so?

First Witch. Ay, sir, all this is so: but why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,
And show the best of our delights:
I 'll charm the air to give a sound,
While you perform your antic round;
That this great king may kindly say,
Our duties did his welcome pay.

[*Music. The Witches dance, and then vanish, with Hecate.*

Macb. Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour
Stand aye accursed in the calendar!
Come in, without there!

Enter LENNOX.

Len. What 's your grace's will?
Macb. Saw you the weird sisters?
Len. No, my lord.
Macb. Came they not by you?
Len. No, indeed, my lord.
Macb. Infected be the air whereon they ride;
And damned all those that trust them! I did hear
The galloping of horse: who was 't came by?
Len. 'T is two or three, my lord, that bring you word
Macduff is fled to England.
Macb. Fled to England!
Len. Ay, my good lord.
Macb. Time, thou anticipat'st my dread exploits:
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it: from this moment
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:
The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool;
This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.
But no more sights! — Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Fife. Macduff's castle.*

Enter LADY MACDUFF, *her* SON, *and* ROSS.

L. Macd. What had he done, to make him fly the land?

Ross. You must have patience, madam.
L. Macd. He had none:
His flight was madness: when our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.
Ross. You know not
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.
L. Macd. Wisdom! to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion and his titles in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not;
He wants the natural touch: for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear and nothing is the love;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.
Ross. My dearest coz,
I pray you, school yourself: but for your husband,
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
The fits o' the season. I dare not speak much further;
But cruel are the times, when we are traitors
And do not know ourselves, when we hold rumor
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,
But float upon a wild and violent sea
Each way and move. I take my leave of you:
Shall not be long but I 'll be here again:
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
To what they were before. My pretty cousin,
Blessing upon you!
L. Macd. Fathered he is, and yet he 's fatherless.
Ross. I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,

It would be my disgrace and your discomfort:
I take my leave at once. [*Exit.*

L. Macd. Sirrah, your father 's dead:
And what will you do now? How will you live?

Son. As birds do, mother.

L. Macd. What, with worms and flies?

Son. With what I get, I mean; and so do they.

L. Macd. Poor bird! thou 'ldst never fear the net nor lime,
The pitfall nor the gin.

Son. Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are not set for.
My father is not dead, for all your saying.

L. Macd. Yes, he is dead: how wilt thou do for a father?

Son. Nay, how will you do for a husband?

L. Macd. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

Son. Then you 'll buy 'em to sell again.

L. Macd. Thou speak'st with all thy wit; and yet, i' faith,
With wit enough for thee.

Son. Was my father a traitor, mother?

L. Macd. Ay, that he was.

Son. What is a traitor?

L. Macd. Why, one that swears and lies.

Son. And be all traitors that do so?

L. Macd. Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hanged.

Son. And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

L. Macd. Every one.

Son. Who must hang them?

L. Macd. Why, the honest men.

Son. Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men and hang up them.

L. Macd. Now, God help thee, poor monkey! But how wilt thou do for a father?

Son. If he were dead, you 'ld weep for him: if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

L. Macd. Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,
Though in your state of honor I am perfect.
I doubt some danger does approach you nearly:
If you will take a homely man's advice,
Be not found here; hence, with your little ones.
To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage;
To do worse to you were fell cruelty,
Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!
I dare abide no longer. [*Exit.*

L. Macd. Whither should I fly?
I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this earthly world; where to do harm
Is often laudable, to do good sometime
Accounted dangerous folly: why then, alas,
Do I put up that womanly defence,
To say I have done no harm?

Enter Murderers.

What are these faces?

First Mur. Where is your husband?

L. Macd. I hope, in no place so unsanctified
Where such as thou may'st find him.
First Mur. He 's a traitor.
Son. Thou liest, thou shag-haired villain!
First Mur. What, you egg!
[*Stabbing him.*
Young fry of treachery!
Son. He has killed me, mother:
Run away, I pray you! [*Dies.*
[*Exit Lady Macduff, crying* 'Murder!'
Exeunt Murderers, following her.

Scene III. *England. Before the King's palace.*

Enter Malcolm *and* Macduff.

Mal. Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
Weep our sad bosoms empty.
Macd. Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men
Bestride our down-fallen birthdom: each new morn
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland and yelled out
Like syllable of dolor.
Mal. What I believe I 'll wail,
What know believe, and what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend, I will.
What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest: you have loved him well:

He hath not touched you yet. I am young: but something
You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom
To offer up a weak poor innocent lamb
To appease an angry god.
Macd. I am not treacherous.
Mal. But Macbeth is.
A good and virtuous nature may recoil
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon;
That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose:
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell:
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace.
Yet grace must still look so.
Macd. I have lost my hopes.
Mal. Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,
Without leave-taking? I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonors,
But mine own safeties. You may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.
Macd. Bleed, bleed, poor country!
Great tyranny! lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dare not check thee: wear thou thy wrongs:
The title is affeered! Fare thee well, lord:
I would not be the villain that thou think'st
For the whole space that 's in the tyrant's grasp,
And the rich East to boot.
Mal. Be not offended:
I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;

It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds: I think withal
There would be hands uplifted in my right;
And here from gracious England have I offer
Of goodly thousands: but, for all this,
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before,
More suffer and more sundry ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.
Macd. What should he be?
Mal. It is myself I mean: in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted
That, when they shall be opened, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared
With my confineless harms.
Macd. Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damned
In evils to top Macbeth.
Mal. I grant him bloody,
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
That has a name: but there 's no bottom, none,
In my voluptuousness: and my desire
All continent impediments would o'erbear
That did oppose my will: better Macbeth
Than such an one to reign.
Macd. Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny; it hath been
The untimely emptying of the happy throne,

And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours: you may
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink.
Mal. With this there grows:
In my most ill-composed affection such
A stanchless avarice that, were I king,
I should cut off the nobles for their lands,
Desire his jewels and this other's house:
And my more-having would be as a sauce
To make me hunger more; that I should forge
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,
Destroying them for wealth.
Macd. This avarice
Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root
Than summer-seeming lust, and it hath been
The sword of our slain kings: yet do not fear;
Scotland hath foisons to fill up your will,
Of your mere own: all these are portable,
With other graces weighed.
Mal. But I have none: the king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
I have no relish of them, but abound
In the division of each several crime,
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
Uproar the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.
Macd. O Scotland, Scotland!

Mal. If such a one be fit to govern, speak:
I am as I have spoken.
Macd. Fit to govern!
No, not to live. O nation miserable,
With an untitled tyrant bloody-sceptered,
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
Since that the truest issue of thy throne
By his own interdiction stands accursed,
And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father
Was a most sainted king: the queen that bore thee,
Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,
Died every day she lived. Fare thee well!
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
Have banished me from Scotland. O my breast,
Thy hope ends here!
Mal. Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of integrity, hath from my soul
Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts
To thy good truth and honor. Devilish Macbeth
By many of these trains hath sought to win me
Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me
From over-credulous haste: but God above
Deal between thee and me! for even now
I put myself to thy direction, and
Unspeak mine own detraction, here abjure
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
For strangers to my nature. I am yet
Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,
At no time broke my faith, would not betray
The devil to his fellow, and delight

No less in truth than life: my first false speaking
Was this upon myself: what I am truly,
Is thine and my poor country's to command:
Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,
Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,
Already at a point, was setting forth.
Now we 'll together; and the chance of goodness
Be like our warranted quarrel! Why are you silent?

Macd. Such welcome and unwelcome things at once
'T is hard to reconcile.

Enter a Doctor.

Mal. Well; more anon. — Comes the king forth, I pray you?

Doct. Ay, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls
That stay his cure: their malady convinces
The great assay of art; but at his touch —
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand —
They presently amend.

Mal. I thank you, doctor. [*Exit Doctor.*

Macd. What 's the disease he means?

Mal. 'T is called The Evil:
A most miraculous work in this good king;
Which often, since my here-remain in England,
I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,
Himself best knows: but strangely-visited people,
All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
The mere despair of surgery, he cures,
Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,
Put on with holy prayers: and 't is spoken,
To the succeeding royalty he leaves

The healing benediction. With this strange virtue,
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,
And sundry blessings hang about his throne,
That speak him full of grace.

Enter Ross.

Macd. See, who comes here?
Mal. My countryman; but yet I know him not.
Macd. My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.
Mal. I know him now. Good God, betimes remove
The means that makes us strangers!
Ross. Sir, amen.
Macd. Stands Scotland where it did?
Ross. Alas, poor country!
Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
Be called our mother, but our grave; where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air
Are made, not marked; where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy: the dead man's knell
Is there scarce asked for who; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.
Macd. O, relation
Too nice, and yet too true!
Mal. What 's the newest grief?
Ross. That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker;
Each minute teems a new one.
Macd. How does my wife?
Ross. Why, well.
Macd. And all my children?

Ross. Well, too.

Macd. The tyrant has not battered at their peace?

Ross. No; they were well at peace when I did leave 'em.

Macd. Be not a niggard of your speech: how goes 't?

Ross. When I came hither to transport the tidings,
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumor
Of many worthy fellows that were out;
Which was to my belief witnessed the rather,
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot:
Now is the time of help; your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff their dire distresses.

Mal. Be 't their comfort
We are coming thither: gracious England hath
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men;
An older and a better soldier none
That Christendom gives out.

Ross. Would I could answer
This comfort with the like! But I have words
That would be howled out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not latch them.

Macd. What concern they?
The general cause? or is it a fee-grief
Due to some single breast?

Ross. No mind that 's honest
But in it shares some woe; though the main part
Pertains to you alone.

Macd. If it be mine,
Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it.

Ross. Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,

Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound
That ever yet they heard.
Macd. Hum! I guess at it.
Ross. Your castle is surprised; your wife and babes
Savagely slaughtered: to relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry of these murdered deer,
To add the death of you.
Mal. Merciful heaven!
What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;
Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break.
Macd. My children too?
Ross. Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.
Macd. And I must be from thence!
My wife killed too?
Ross. I have said.
Mal. Be comforted:
Let 's make us medicines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.
Macd. He has no children. All my pretty ones?
Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop?
Mal. Dispute it like a man.
Macd. I shall do so;
But I must also feel it as a man.
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee! naught that I am,

Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now!
Mal. Be this the whetstone of your sword: let grief
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.
Macd. O, I could play the woman with mine eyes
And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission; front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,
Heaven forgive him too!
Mal. This tune goes manly.
Come, go we to the king; our power is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave: Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
Put on their instruments. Receive what cheer you may:
The night is long that never finds the day.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene I. *Dunsinane. Ante-room in the castle.*

Enter a Doctor of Physic *and a* Waiting-Gentlewoman.

Doct. I have two nights watched with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked?

Gent. Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon 't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

Doct. A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching! In this slumbery agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say?

Gent. That, sir, which I will not report after her.

Doct. You may to me: and 't is most meet you should.

Gent. Neither to you nor any one; having no witness to confirm my speech.

Enter LADY MACBETH, *with a taper.*

Lo you, here she comes! This is her very guise; and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her; stand close.

Doct. How came she by that light?

Gent. Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 't is her command.

Doct. You see, her eyes are open.

Gent. Ay, but their sense is shut.

Doct. What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

Gent. It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands: I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

Lady M. Yet here 's a spot.

Doct. Hark! she speaks: I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

Lady M. Out, damned spot! out, I say! — One: two: why, then, 't is time to do 't. — Hell is murky! — Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account? —

Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him.

Doct. Do you mark that?

Lady M. The thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now? — What, will these hands ne'er be clean? — No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with this starting.

Doct. Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

Gent. She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that: heaven knows what she has known.

Lady M. Here 's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

Doct. What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.

Gent. I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.

Doct. Well, well, well, —

Gent. Pray God it be, sir.

Doct. This disease is beyond my practice: yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

Lady M. Wash your hands, put on your nightgown; look not so pale. — I tell you yet again, Banquo 's buried; he cannot come out on 's grave.

Doct. Even so?

Lady M. To bed, to bed! there 's knocking at the gate: come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What 's done cannot be undone. — To bed, to bed, to bed!

[*Exit.*

All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.
—Act V. Scene 1.

Doct. Will she go now to bed?
Gent. Directly.
Doct. Foul whisperings are abroad: unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets:
More needs she the divine than the physician.
God, God forgive us all! Look after her;
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,
And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night:
My mind she has mated, and amazed my sight.
I think, but dare not speak.
Gent. Good night, good doctor.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *The country near Dunsinane.*

Drum and colors. Enter Menteith, Caithness, Angus, Lennox, *and* Soldiers.

Ment. The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward and the good Macduff:
Revenges burn in them; for their dear causes
Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm
Excite the mortified man.
Ang. Near Birnam wood
Shall we well meet them; that way are they coming.
Caith. Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?
Len. For certain, sir, he is not: I have a file
Of all the gentry: there is Siward's son,
And many unrough youths that even now
Protest their first of manhood.
Ment. What does the tyrant?

Caith. Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies:
Some say he 's mad; others that lesser hate him
Do call it valiant fury: but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distempered cause
Within the belt of rule.
Ang. Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands;
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach;
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love: now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.
Ment. Who then shall blame
His pestered senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there?
Caith. Well, march we on,
To give obedience where 't is truly owed:
Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal,
And with him pour we in our country's purge
Each drop of us.
Len. Or so much as it needs,
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds.
Make we our march towards Birnam.

[*Exeunt, marching.*

SCENE III. *Dunsinane. A room in the castle.*

Enter MACBETH, Doctor, *and* Attendants.

Macb. Bring me no more reports; let them fly all:
Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,

I cannot taint with fear. What 's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know
All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus:
'Fear not, Macbeth; no man that 's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee.' Then fly, false thanes,
And mingle with the English epicures;
The mind I sway by and the heart I bear
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

Enter a Servant.

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon!
Where got'st thou that goose look?
Serv. There is ten thousand —
Macb. Geese, villain?
Serv. Soldiers, sir.
Macb. Go prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,
Thou lily-livered boy. What soldiers, patch?
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face?
Serv. The English force, so please you.
Macb. Take thy face hence. [*Exit Servant.*
Seyton! — I am sick at heart,
When I behold — Seyton, I say! — This push
Will cheer me ever, or disseat me now.
I have lived long enough: my way of life
Is fallen into the sear, the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honor, breath,

Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.
Seyton!

Enter SEYTON.

Sey. What is your gracious pleasure?
Macb. What news more?
Sey. All is confirmed, my lord, which was reported.
Macb. I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hacked.
Give me my armor.
Sey. 'T is not needed yet.
Macb. I 'll put it on.
Send out moe horses; skirr the country round;
Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armor.
How does your patient, doctor?
Doct. Not so sick, my lord,
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,
That keep her from her rest.
Macb. Cure her of that.
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?
Doct. Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.
Macb. Throw physic to the dogs; I 'll none of it.
Come, put mine armor on; give me my staff.
Seyton, send out. Doctor, the thanes fly from me.
Come, sir, dispatch. If thou couldst, doctor, cast

The water of my land, find her disease,
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,
I would applaud thee to the very echo,
That should applaud again. — Pull 't off, I say. —
What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug,
Would scour these English hence? Hear'st thou of them?

Doct. Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.

Macb. Bring it after me.
I will not be afraid of death and bane,
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane.

Doct. [*Aside*] Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,
Profit again should hardly draw me here. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. *Country near Birnam wood.*

Drum and colors. Enter Malcolm, *old* Siward *and his* Son, Macduff, Menteith, Caithness, Angus, Lennox, Ross, *and* Soldiers, *marching.*

Mal. Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand
That chambers will be safe.

Ment. We doubt it nothing.

Siw. What wood is this before us?

Ment. The wood of Birnam.

Mal. Let every soldier hew him down a bough
And bear 't before him: thereby shall we shadow
The numbers of our host and make discovery
Err in report of us.

Soldiers. It shall be done.

Siw. We learn no other but the confident tyrant
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure
Our setting down before 't.
Mal. 'T is his main hope:
For where there is advantage to be given,
Both more and less have given him the revolt,
And none serve with him but constrained things
Whose hearts are absent too.
Macd. Let our just censures
Attend the true event, and put we on
Industrious soldiership.
Siw. The time approaches
That will with due decision make us know
What we shall say we have and what we owe.
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate:
Towards which advance the war. [*Exeunt, marching.*

SCENE V. *Dunsinane. Within the castle.*

Enter MACBETH, SEYTON, *and* Soldiers, *with drum and colors.*

Macb. Hang out our banners on the outward walls;
The cry is still 'They come': our castle's strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn: here let them lie
Till famine and the ague eat them up:
Were they not forced with those that should be ours,
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home.
[*A cry of women within.*
What is that noise?

Sey. It is the cry of women, my good lord. [*Exit.*

Macb. I have almost forgot the taste of fears:
The time has been, my senses would have cooled
To hear a night-shriek; and my fell of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir
As life were in 't: I have supped full with horrors;
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.

Re-enter SEYTON.

Wherefore was that cry?

Sey. The queen, my lord, is dead.

Macb. She should have died hereafter;
There should have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life 's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Enter a Messenger.

Thou comest to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.

Mess. Gracious my lord,
I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do it.

Macb. Well, say, sir.

Mess. As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I looked toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.
Macb. Liar and slave!
Mess. Let me endure your wrath, if 't be not so:
Within this three mile you may see it coming;
I say, a moving grove.
Macb. If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
Till famine cling thee: if thy speech be sooth,
I care not if thou dost for me as much.
I pull in resolution, and begin
To doubt the equivocation of the fiend
That lies like truth: 'Fear not, till Birnam wood
Do come to Dunsinane:' and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out!
If this which he avouches does appear,
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.
I gin to be aweary of the sun,
And wish the estate o' the world were now undone.
Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! come, wrack!
At least we 'll die with harness on our back. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI. *Dunsinane. Before the castle.*

Drum and colors. Enter Malcolm, *old* Siward, Macduff, *and their* Army, *with boughs.*

Mal. Now near enough: your leafy screens throw down,
And show like those you are. You, worthy uncle,
Shall, with my cousin, your right-noble son,

And now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane.

— Act V. Scene 5.

Lead our first battle: worthy Macduff and we
Shall take upon 's what else remains to do,
According to our order.
Siw. Fare you well.
Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.
Macd. Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath,
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *Another part of the field.*

Alarums. Enter MACBETH.

Macb. They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly,
But, bear-like, I must fight the course. What 's he
That was not born of woman? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none.

Enter young SIWARD.

Yo. Siw. What is thy name?
Macb. Thou 'lt be afraid to hear it.
Yo. Siw. No; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name
Than any is in hell.
Macb. My name 's Macbeth.
Yo. Siw. The devil himself could not pronounce a title
More hateful to mine ear.
Macb. No, nor more fearful.
Yo. Siw. Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword

I 'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

[*They fight and young Siward is slain.*

Macb. Thou wast born of woman.
But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,
Brandished by man that 's of a woman born. [*Exit.*

Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.

Macd. That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy face!
If thou be'st slain and with no stroke of mine,
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.
I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms
Are hired to bear their staves: either thou, Macbeth,
Or else my sword with an unbattered edge
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou shouldst be;
By this great clatter, one of greatest note
Seems bruited. Let me find him, fortune!
And more I beg not. [*Exit. Alarums.*

Enter MALCOLM *and old* SIWARD.

Siw. This way, my lord; the castle 's gently rendered:
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight;
The noble thanes do bravely in the war;
The day almost itself professes yours,
And little is to do.

Mal. We have met with foes
That strike beside us.

Siw. Enter, sir, the castle.

[*Exeunt. Alarums.*

Of all men else I have avoided thee:
But get thee back; my soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.

— Act V. Scene 8.

Scene VIII. *Another part of the field.*

Enter Macbeth.

Macb. Why should I play the Roman fool, and die
On mine own sword? whiles I see lives, the gashes
Do better upon them.

Enter Macduff.

Macd. Turn, hell-hound, turn!
Macb. Of all men else I have avoided thee:
But get thee back; my soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.
Macd. I have no words:
My voice is in my sword: thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out! [*They fight.*
Macb. Thou losest labor:
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed:
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;
I bear a charmed life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.
Macd. Despair thy charm;
And let the angel whom thou still hast served
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripped.
Macb. Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cowed my better part of man!
And be these juggling fiends no more believed,
That palter with us in a double sense;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope. I 'll not fight with thee.

Macd. Then yield thee, coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o' the time:
We 'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
' Here may you see the tyrant.'
Macb. I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last. Before my body
I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff,
And damned be him that first cries ' Hold, enough!'
[*Exeunt, fighting. Alarums.*

Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colors, MALCOLM, *old* SIWARD, ROSS, *the other* Thanes, *and* Soldiers.

Mal. I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.
Siw. Some must go off: and yet, by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.
Mal. Macduff is missing, and your noble son.
Ross. Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt:
He only lived but till he was a man;
The which no sooner had his prowess confirmed
In the unshrinking station where he fought,
But like a man he died.
Siw. Then he is dead?
Ross. Ay, and brought off the field: your cause of sorrow
Must not be measured by his worth, for then
It hath no end.

Siw. Had he his hurts before?
Ross. Ay, on the front.
Siw. Why then, God's soldier be he!
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death:
And so, his knell is knolled.
Mal. He 's worth more sorrow,
And that I 'll spend for him.
Siw. He 's worth no more:
They say he parted well, and paid his score:
And so, God be with him! Here comes newer comfort.

Re-enter MACDUFF, *with* MACBETH'S *head.*

Macd. Hail, king! for so thou art: behold, where stands
The usurper's cursed head: the time is free:
I see thee compassed with thy kingdom's pearl,
That speak my salutation in their minds;
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine:
Hail, King of Scotland!
All. Hail, King of Scotland! [*Flourish.*
Mal. We shall not spend a large expense of time
Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland
In such an honor named. What 's more to do,
Which would be planted newly with the time,
As calling home our exiled friends abroad
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny;
Producing forth the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen,

Who, as 't is thought, by self and violent hands
Took off her life; this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,
We will perform in measure, time and place:
So, thanks to all at once and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crowned at Scone.
[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

APPENDIX

THE WRITING AND PUBLICATION OF MACBETH

Real interest in ascertaining the exact year in which Shakespeare wrote any one of his plays belongs mostly to those who, in investigation, love not the end of the search so much as the search itself; who feel the charm of conjecture and surmise, of argument without determination, of speculation without confirmation.

It is a simple thing to say that all the plays of Shakespeare were written during a period of twenty years, from 1591 to 1611; and, beyond wonder at the shortness of the time, there is no great interest to be felt in the fact. But to know something of the order of the writing of that marvelous series is an alluring problem, of which one solution is almost as good as another, and no final solution really attainable.

Had the plays been carried as soon as completed to the *Stationers' Register*, — the official method then of licensing publication, — and there recorded, all would be simple enough. But a play in Elizabethan days was written to be played, not read; and owners and managers of theaters, even authors, did their best to keep a play out of print until its popularity on the stage was on the wane, — a date of varying remoteness, naturally, from its writing.

Dowden may divide Shakespeare's plays into four periods, and give them illuminating biographical headings: "In the Workshop," apprentice days, given up to the

writing of the early comedies; "In the World," days in a London thrilling with the life of the Renaissance and a new patriotic pride in England, given over to the writing of the historical plays; "Out of the Depths," days of great personal suffering, — envy, hatred and malice of rivals, and death of his only son, given to the writing of tragedies; "On the Heights," days of prosperity, and quiet after storm, back again in Stratford, given to the writing of the romances.

A very simple pattern, — but too simple: the divisions must be divided and subdivided again, to allow for early, middle, and later comedies, and tragedies, or histories plainly written out of the second period, or a romance earlier than the peaceful closing years. So there is elusion and escape on every hand; but there is always the zest of the chase in running down every scent that may lead to cover.

The best leads, of course, in establishing the date of any play are in the play itself. They may seem very slight evidences as we array them, — especially so in the case of "Macbeth," — but they are there, and mean something. For instance, in Act II, Scene iii, we find, "Here 's a farmer that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty," — and record books of the day say that the summer and autumn of 1606, with a plentiful harvest and no market, were tragic seasons for the English yeomen.

Again, in the same scene, "here 's an equivocator that could swear in both scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven,"— and possibly we have here an allusion to the controversy on the morality of equivo-

cation — a controversy which was especially acrimonious just after the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. Competent Shakespearean commentators regard as futile, attempts to identify the equivocator alluded to. In the judgment of Edward Dowden, the equivocator is Macbeth himself.

Still again we read, "here 's an English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French hose," — and a book called *The Black Year*, by one Anthony Nixon, known to have been published in 1606, says: "Gentlemen this year shall be much wronged by their tailors for their consciences are now much larger than ever they were, for where they were wont to steale but half a yard of broad cloth in making up a paire of breeches, now they do largely nicke their customers in the lace too, and take more than enough for the new fashion's sake beside their old ones." The French hose, according to the style of 1603–1606, was so short and tight that he must indeed be a swindler who could steal anything from the pattern furnished him.

But more convincing than these allusions is the reference in Act IV, Scene i, to the union of the three kingdoms under James I: "And some I see that two-fold balls and treble scepters carry." James was proclaimed king of Great Britain and Ireland in October, 1604, so "Macbeth" plainly was written after 1604; and, as such notices in plays won great applause in those days from audiences, probably it was written while the new king's accession still quickened interest in Scottish history. And just as surely must the play have been written before 1607, since a play carefully registered on that date alludes to Banquo's ghost in "We 'll ha' the ghost i' th' white sheet sit at upper end o' th' table."

The date of "Macbeth," then, is narrowed to somewhere between 1604 and 1607 — with some probability of its being 1606. Is there any real evidence, however, for making it later than 1605? Just one bit, so far discovered — possibly a strong bit. When Macbeth in Act I, Scene iii, being made Thane of Cawdor, says, "Why do you dress me in borrowed robes?" — a speech followed out by Banquo's later excuse for his absorption, —

"New honors come upon him,
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould
But with the aid of use," —

the dramatist must be directing that an actual investiture take place upon the stage, and must be alluding to the recent spectacle of the investiture of Sir David Muray as Lord Scone in 1605, — a reward that came to him, as to Macbeth, for saving his king from traitors.

What might be the greatest help of all in fixing the date of "Macbeth" is the likeness between the witch scenes of Shakespeare and those in a contemporary play, *The Witch*, by Thomas Middleton. There are surprisingly exact and minute similarities in phrases, lines, whole dialogues, in the songs of the witches, and in the presence of Hecate, Middleton's witch, in Shakespeare's play. If we only knew the exact date of the writing of Middleton's play, — but we do not! If we only knew whether the lesser poet copied from the greater, or the greater from the lesser; if we only knew whether Shakespeare asked Middleton to help him in certain parts of his play, or if Middleton, after Shakespeare's death and before the folio printing of "Macbeth," prepared the copy himself, interpolating his own work as it was not uncommon in those days to do!

Surely the witch scenes in Acts III and IV are by another hand than Shakespeare's; much of them is decidedly mediocre. Even to an untrained reader they do not sound like Shakespeare; and the witches of Shakespeare in the first and last acts are titanic creations in comparison with the almost commonplace Hecate of Acts III and IV. There is a helping hand evident,— and that the hand is Middleton's is clear enough: but whether that hand wrote its own play earlier or later than "Macbeth," or whether it was called in by Shakespeare, or gave gratuitous help later, we have so far no way of determining.

But we do know, for a fact, that in July, 1606, the King of Denmark came to England to pay his respects to his sister, Queen Anne, and on August 3rd was made a Knight of the Garter. Drummond of Hawthornden, in a letter written upon that day, says, "There is nothing to be heard at court but sounding of trumpets, hautboys, musick, revellings, and comedies." Possibly, almost probably, "Macbeth," — which shows great haste, masterly haste, in construction and composition, and, in its unevenness, evidences of collaboration, — was hurriedly written, possibly by the order of King James, to celebrate that event.

Absolute evidence of the production of "Macbeth" we find in a kind of dramatic journal by Simon Forman, a London astrologer and quack, in which much space is given to the play. It begins thus: "In Mackbeth at the Glob, 1610, the 20 of April, there was observed, first, howe Mackbeth and Bancko, two noble men of Scotland riding throuw a wod, ther strode before them three women feiries or nimphes, and saluted Mackbeth, saying three

tymes unto him, Haille Mackbeth, King of Codor; for thou shalt be a kinge, but shalt beget no kings." At least the play could not have been written after 1610!

During Shakespeare's lifetime only a few of his plays were printed in quarto form — thin bound volumes so called because the printer's sheets were folded twice to make four leaves, eight pages, about six inches by nine, — bearing on their title-pages a record of the company of players who had acted them, sometimes as naïve a record of their success as this, on the quarto of "Romeo and Juliet"; *As it has been often (with great applause) plaid publicquely by the Right Honourable the L. of Hunsdon his servants.*

But "Macbeth" was not, so far as is known, printed in any form before Shakespeare's death. It appeared first in the First Folio, the first collection of the plays (1623). There it occupies twenty-one pages in the division of Tragedies, between "Julius Caesar" and "Hamlet"; and in the record of the Stationers' Company it is registered on November 8th, 1623, as a play "Not formerly entered to other men." It stands in the Folio as one of the worst printed plays, — full of roughness of meter, and broken and corrupt passages, which may indicate that it was printed from a transcript of Shakespeare's manuscript or perhaps not copied from the original but written to dictation.

The editors of the Clarendon Press believe that many parts of the play are interpolations: especially do they object to the second scene of the first act, as being too perfunctory for Shakespeare's hand, and the meeting of the witches in the third scene, the drunken porter's soliloquy in the second act, the witch scenes in the third act, and some of the prosy scenes of the fourth and fifth acts.

MATERIAL USED BY SHAKESPEARE IN MACBETH

If, as seems possible, King James, to celebrate the visit of the King of Denmark in 1606, asked Shakespeare for a new play to be presented by the King's Players, the dramatist doubtless hastily consulted such material as he had at hand for a new plot, the rough clay for his molding. The great collection which had never failed him was *The Chronicle of England and Scotland*, by Raphael Holinshed and others, in folio form. Here again he found what he wanted, changed it as he wished; and, working with the freedom of his greatness, made a Banquo, a Duncan, a Macduff of his own, — and a Lord and Lady Macbeth who live and breathe an intenser tragedy than any mere chronicle could suggest, except to a genius like Shakespeare.

It is easy enough for us to go to reprints of *The Chronicle*, and read there the even, commonplace accounts of Holinshed, but there is never a thrill in his stories as he tells them. How quietly he says, "The words of the weird sisters also greatlie incouraged him hereunto, but speciallie his wife lay sore upon him to attempt the thing, as she that was verie ambitious, having an unquenchable desire to beare the name of queene." Compare with that the burning words of Lady Macbeth in the great speech beginning. "Glamis thou art and Cawdor; and shalt be what thou art promised" through to the heights of,

> "Hie thee hither,
> That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;
> And chastise with the valour of my tongue

All that impedes thee from the golden round,
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
To have thee crowned withal."

It is the climax of all those powerful convincing speeches of hers during the moments of Macbeth's wavering over the terrible "night's great business," and it has its beginning in a most quiet and simple statement in a prosy chronicle. And how colorless is the same record of the "uncouth wonder," the "three women in strange and wild apparell, resembling creatures of Elder world," "goddesses of destinie, or else some nymphs or fairies indeed with knowledge of prophesie by their necromanticall science," "certaine wizzards," in comparison with the poet's powerful sexless figures, controlling, but uncontrolled, demons of the "fog and filthy air" to whom forever "Fair is foul, and foul is fair!"

Or again, to appreciate the vivid lights and shadows of Shakespeare's tragic picture of hope and despair fighting each other in the fifth act, we need only read Holinshed's account: "Malcome following hastilie after Mackbeth came the night before the battell into Birnane wood, and when his armie had rested a while there to refresh them, he commanded everie man to get a bough of some tree or other of the wood in his hand, as big as he might beare, and to march foorth therewith in such wise, that on the next morrow they might come closelie, and without sight, in the manner within viewe of his enemies.

"On the morrow when Mackbeth beheld them coming in this sort, he first marvelled what the matter ment, but in the end remembered himselfe that the prophesie which he had heard long before that time, of the coming of Bir-

nane wood to Dunsinane castell, was likelie to be now fulfilled. Nevertheless, he brought his men in order of battell, and exhorted them to doo valiantlie, howbeit his enemies had scarcely cast from them their boughs, when Mackbeth perceiving their number, betooke him streict to flight, whom Makduffe pursued with great hatred even till he came unto Dunfounaine, where Mackbeth perceiving that Makduffe was hard at his backe, leapt beside his horse, saieing: Thou traitor, what meaneth it that thou shouldest thus in vaine follow me that are not appointed to be slaine by anie creature that is borne of a woman; come on therefore, and receive thy reward which thou hast deserved for thy paines, and therewith all he lifted up his swoord thinking to have slaine him.

"But Mackduffe quicklie avoiding from his horsse, eyer he came at him, answered (with his naked sword in his hand) saieing: It is true, Mackbeth, and now shall thine insatiable crueltie have an end, for I am even he that thy wizzards have told thee of, who was never borne of my mother, but ripped out of her wombe: there with all he stept unto him, and slue him in the place."

Such passages as these are the formless matter with which Shakespeare worked, seizing upon every dramatic possibility he found in prosaic material, upon every suggestion of human interest; turning formless, seemingly insignificant incidents into "horrible imaginings," or fiery dialogues, or soul-searching soliloquies, and massing all into what Hallam does not hesitate to call "the most sublime and impressive drama which the world has ever beheld."

One may read all the extracts from Holinshed which the dramatist apparently used; one may trace with exactness where he follows and where he strikes out a new path for himself; one may speculate, where he is careless of an historical fact, whether he is really unconscious of it, or willfully disrespectful; but when all is done, nothing of any real value is established except one clear spectacle — that of a truly great man's amazing frankness in borrowing from another's book all that he wanted, and his fearlessness in molding it to his own artistic purpose.

In those days when plays were rapidly demanded by patrons of companies of players, and by audiences clamoring like children daily for some new thing, such a borrowing of material was not uncommon. Shakespeare was not thinking, — as the "clever" playwright of to-day must, whose success largely depends upon his inventiveness,— of *making* a plot that no one else had thought of: he was thinking of *using* one as no one else had used it. He knew well, from his own actor and manager days, old plays and comtemporary plays, Italian *novellae*, chronicles, histories, ballads, fables, Plutarch's *Lives*, the *Gesta Romanorum*, strange books on demonology and witchcraft, books of travel; current events even were suggestive to him. And as Kipling says of Homer:

> "An' what 'e thought 'e might require,
> He went and took."

His creative joy was not in inventing, but in fashioning what he took into dramatic form, — the rising, accumulating complication, the lofty climax, the inevitable

catastrophe. His is always the pattern of the weaving; his, the colors, the shades; let other men, then, furnish him the threads: he could use the slenderest, or the roughest. Did not the Greek dramatists the same? Did Æschylus *invent* the plot of "The Persians" or "Prometheus Bound," or Sophocles that of "Antigone" or "Electra" or "Œdipus the King"? Or, jumping the centuries, did John Drinkwater *invent* any of the material of his drama "Abraham Lincoln"?

Shakespeare saw clearly the dramatic possibilities in the chronicle of Macbeth, King of Scotland, — and knew unerringly that they would appeal to the Elizabethan audience. The pervading atmosphere of bloodshed, and thunder and lightning, darkness, and the underworld, would give their thrills. The murder of Duncan is an appealing tale at any time. Ghosts and sleepwalking scenes, — are they not back again on our own stage to-day although in the delicate poetic form of "Peter Grimm" or "Marie Rose" or "The Well-Remembered Voice"? Prophecies, with quips and tricks that both defeat and fulfill them, could be counted on to charm; and the clash of arms, at the end, with the final courageous battle-cry of the hero,

"Lay on, Macduff,
And damned be him that first cries, 'Hold, enough!'"

would crown all, and satisfy both royalty in the court, and the vulgar crowd in the pit of "The Globe."

Furthermore, Shakespeare saw that this was just the history to flatter King James. Tradition said that Banquo was King James's ancestor. In the play Banquo

is to "get kings, though he be none": and the last vision in that "show of kings" that rises from the cauldron and so terrifies Macbeth, is the line of Banquo's issue, for whom "he had filed his blood," carrying "two-fold balls and treble sceptres," foretelling what soon happened, the union of Scotland, England, and Ireland under the son of Mary Stuart.

James, too, was intensely interested in demonology; he believed in the sovereign's power to cure "the king's evil" which Shakespeare in the fourth act gives as an attribute of Edward the Confessor; and he was patriot enough to appreciate the poet's reconstruction of Duncan and Banquo, making them saints beside the bloodthirsty and vicious portraits in Holinshed, and his darkening of Macbeth, who was in history a righteous and beneficent monarch, into a villain that would dare tamper with the sacred succession of Scottish kings! Apparently, Shakespeare says, "Thus far shall I go and no farther in following my authority, — my bounds are set by no one but myself."

There are details of some interest, of course, in comparing the drama with the chronicle. For instance, absolute history says that Duncan's grandfather dethroned and slew the grandfather of Lady Macbeth, which, although Shakespeare did not tell us so in his lines, might give to Lady Macbeth a most natural if unjustifiable motive for killing Duncan: was not the crown rightfully hers and her lord's? It throws much light backward on those long discussions the two must have had before the action of the play begins, alluded to when she says:

"Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dressed yourself?"

"What beast was 't, then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?"

"Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both."

Again history says that young Siward was actually slain several years before the battle between Macduff and Macbeth; but who would forego the dramatic power of that last victory of Macbeth's, or the delicate tenderness of a father's restrained grief over a boy who died "with all his hurts before"? And still again it is history we must blame for the bathos at the end of the play, when Macbeth's head is brought in upon a pole, and he and his lady, who have had our hearts' sympathy for five acts, are called by Malcolm, "the dead butcher and his fiend-like queen."

The most interesting of Shakespeare's willful arrangements, or rearrangements, of material, is his substituting for the murder of Duncan,— a fact barely alluded to in Holinshed,— an elaborately planned and executed murder of another king by another assassin. And Lady Macbeth, only a name in the chronicle, is the other murderer's wife, self-reliant, ambitious, executive, powerful in influence over her husband, borrowed by Shakespeare to be the "undaunted mettle" of his heroine.

All such comparisons, however, only show again that Shakespeare is a literary workman in finding material that he wanted, and using it for his own great purposes. *Only*, being a creator, he has made other men's material

live. Mr. Horace Bridges, in his delightful volume, *Our Fellow Shakespeare*, gives us this human picture of the relation between the dramatist and his material: "His method of work lies on the face of his plays. He crammed for each of them as the college man crams for his exam, — though with far less regard to accuracy. For his English or Scottish history he went to Holinshed. Whether what Holinshed gave was true he did not know, and he cared as little as some newspaper reporters care whether what they write is true. What he wanted was material for a dramatic story. He picked it up wherever he could find it, and he made such use of it as he chose. For his knowledge of foreign countries he probably depended much more upon conversation than upon books. . . . The one kind of knowledge in which he excelled all other men — the knowledge of human character, of the loves and hates, the desires and aversions of the human heart, the knowledge of 'the breaking strain of a man under temptation' — such knowledge is not to be found in books. It is here that his creative force, his unrivalled powers of observation and sympathy, came into play. Many a schoolboy might correct the historical statements and implications of 'Macbeth.' Any university professor could point out anachronisms and impossibilities by the score in 'King Lear,' 'The Winter's Tale,' and 'Cymbeline.' But where was the school, and where were the books, from which the poet learned to describe the workings of Macbeth's soul under the strain of the impulse to murder, and under the ever-deepening horror of the sense of guilt? . . . Book-learning will account for knowledge, but not for wisdom and insight."

THE TIME DURATION OF MACBETH

To establish the actual number of days presented in "Macbeth," and between these the probable length of intervals, brings us to a matter of workmanship. The dynamic effect of a play must not be weakened by explanations; a word here, an allusion or speech there, may give a revealing touch, no more. And when these touches are arrayed for our consideration, we see that the great dramatist leaves nothing hidden, uncertain, out of order, or unexplainable.

The first day is, for Macbeth, a day that marks the completion of a winning fight with the forces of Norway and the traitor Cawdor, and the beginning (although he does not know it) of a losing fight with the impalpable forces of evil, in the Weird Sisters. On that day, Act I, Scene i, the witches plan to meet Macbeth, near the fighting place, "ere the set of sun." At the same time, while the battle rages, the bleeding sergeant, in Scene ii, tells of Macbeth's bravery, and Duncan orders Macbeth honored with the title of Thane of Cawdor. At the end of the day, in Scene iii, comes the meeting of the witches with Macbeth and Banquo on the heath as they leave the battlefield. How much material is compressed here into one time and place!

The second day begins with Scene iv, in the morning, at the camp and includes Scene v at Inverness, and Scene vi. Scene vii is the same evening and holds the great

moment when Macbeth reads in his wife's eyes the unalterable determination that the king shall never go hence. So the second day is a perfect unit of action: all things work together for the death of the king.

The third day begins with Scene i of Act II, and includes all the action through Scene iv. In Scene ii, Lady Macbeth awaits Macbeth in the court, and the knocking at the gate sends them to their beds. In Scene iii, the porter opens the gate to Macduff and Lennox; Scene iv is evidently the same early morning. So again, we have unerring compression into one day of all the action that centers around the assassination of Duncan.

Now intervenes *an interval of time*, — just how long is, of course, a matter of conjecture. There evidently has been, with the king and queen, a period of "restless ecstasy," of growing fears of Banquo, of "rancours in the vessel of peace," of "sorriest fancies," of "terrible dreams that shake them nightly," of remorse over the crime that gave for a reward only "a fruitless crown" and "a barren sceptre." Whether the time is one week, or two, or three, hardly matters. The interval need not be a long one.

After the interval, there is another final gathering up of action into one day, *the fourth*. Scenes i, ii, iii, and iv of Act III center entirely around the murder of Banquo. All occur in one day. Scene v seems an impossible one to place in any scheme of time. Perhaps it is best to call it, as Furness frankly does, "in parenthesis," "a link only between Acts III and IV."

The fifth day, then, opens with Act IV, Scene i, early morning in the witches' cavern. Lennox brings news

of Macduff's flight to England. Macbeth's determination thereupon that he will seize Macduff's castle,

> "give to the edge o' the sword
> His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
> That trace him in his line."

is the great argument for feeling that *the next day*, *the sixth*, sees the murder of Scene ii. After this must come some interval for allowing Ross to carry the tragic news to Macduff. On *the seventh day* takes place the long conversation between Malcolm and Macduff, — giving the distinct impression of an interval, — before Ross arrives to speak those tragic words which "would be howled out in the desert air." Two separate days only then are presented in the entire fourth act: one to bend Macbeth's mind upon Macduff; one to turn Macduff's embittered mind back upon Macbeth. The final catastrophe is now fully prepared.

Act V, Scene i, the sleepwalking scene, may easily be upon the night of *the seventh day;* it may just as easily be any one of these days in which Malcolm is marching back to Scotland with his English recruits.

On *the eighth day* Macbeth's deserters march to Birnam and join the English forces, in Scene ii; and Macbeth, in Scene iii, hearing this, arms himself in desperate defense.

On *the ninth and last day*, in one great rush of accumulating tragedy, the English screen their army with boughs cut in Birnam wood, in Scene iv; Lady Macbeth dies, in Scene v, and Birnam wood comes to Dunsinane; the army of Malcolm throws down its leafy screen, in Scene vi;

Macbeth gains one last victory in slaying Siward, in Scene vii, and his final defeat in fighting Macduff, in Scene viii.

Only nine days are selected, then, from the career of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, — and yet we feel we know them through the extended period of a whole lifetime! We sometimes speak of the "Short Time," and the "Long Time" of a drama — two things existing side by side. As we watch "Macbeth" on the stage we are struck with the volcanic power of those nine days which are presented — the "Short Time" : but in the end we are broken ourselves with the spectacle of how time, the "Long Time," has dealt with two human souls forever fighting destiny. It is only to appreciate how an artist can instinctively manage dramatic compression of time, and yet keep a background of time moving at its normal rate, that it is worth while to compute at all the time scheme of any great drama.

TRAGIC DESTINATION IN MACBETH

All discussions as to what constitutes the essence of tragedy and the essential difference between tragedy and comedy resolve themselves into one simple distinction. A tragedy is the history of a man's struggle against fate, — fate, in its broadest sense, meaning whatever is apparently ordained to come to a man in the way of temptation to entertain evil for the sake of some high prize that is to him the "chief ornament of life."

In the struggle with this temptation the hero finds that as his moral fiber weakens, further temptations crowd upon him. At the same time he becomes conscious of the approach of retribution for the first wrongs committed; in fact, this shadow of punishment is often the minor spur that drives him to yield to temptation more and more. The end of the tragedy is inevitable, that he shall lose in the struggle and be overcome by some form of disaster usually death.

Whether destruction of spirit with death, as in the case of Macbeth, or disintegration of spirit without death, as in the case of Shylock, the point must always be maintained that flashes of the original spirit of the man, — almost a sunset glow of what was his splendid dawn, — must light his end, lift it out of mere commonplace punishment, and show us a wreck, to be sure, but still a noble wreck. Aristotle says of the hero of a tragedy:

(1) A tragedy must not be the spectacle of a perfectly good man brought from prosperity to adversity. For this merely shocks us.

(2) Nor, of course, must it be that of a bad man passing from adversity to prosperity: for that is not tragedy at all, but the perversion of tragedy, and revolts the moral sense.

(3) Nor, again, should it exhibit the downfall of an utter villain: since pity is aroused by undeserved misfortunes, terror by misfortunes befalling a man like ourselves.

(4) There remains, then, as the only proper subject for tragedy, the spectacle of a man not absolutely or eminently good or wise who is brought to disaster not by sheer depravity but by some error or frailty.

(5) Lastly, this man must be highly renowned and prosperous — an Œdipus, a Thyestes, or some other illustrious person.

Quiller-Couch writes[1]: "A hero of Tragic Drama must, whatever else he miss, engage our sympathy; that, however gross his error or grievous his frailty, it must not exclude our feeling that he is a man like ourselves; that, sitting in the audience, we must know in our hearts that what is befalling him might conceivably in the circumstance have befallen us, and say in our hearts, 'There, but for the grace of God, go I.'"

This insures the combination of admiration and pity which the figure of a tragic hero is always entitled to, even demands. Then, if we turn all this terrible and real struggle into the lines of a mock-struggle which, although it seems most real to the characters involved, is only make-believe, because, as we know from our side of the curtain, the apparent obstacles are no obstacles at all, we

[1] Shakespeare's Workmanship, p. 17.

have the essence of a comedy. The complications are unraveled by some unexpected surprise, the light-hearted characters, at the end of their short session of seeming disasters, go on laughing and loving to a happy dénouement — usually marriage.

Variety in either comedy or tragedy, of course, comes in the characters themselves and in the kinds of obstacles which fate puts in their way. In "Macbeth," the most interesting, because the most subtle and pervading obstacle, the supernatural, is the very thing which at first seems to be his chief inspiration and support. It is childish to say that the witches are Macbeth's great temptation; it is true understanding of the tragedy to say that his Destiny, including his temptation and his reaction to it, his career of crime and his retribution, are bound up in the most complex way with the power that the supernatural has over him.

To understand just how subtle this influence is we need only look at the hero's attitude toward it when it appears first in the form of temptation. When the witches first came to Macbeth, — as when a sign or "voice" comes to any one, — there were three ways[1] in which he might receive their prophecy: he might blindly obey it, in the sense of letting its fulfillment become the chief business of his days; second, he might ignore it, being conscious of it but letting it have no influence whatever upon his actions; third, he might oppose it by being ever on the alert to see that no act of his should in the least be influenced by it. Following through the lines of the play

[1] This is fully worked out by Professor Moulton in his essay on *Macbeth*, in *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist*, Chapter VI.

we find at first when Macbeth is hailed as "king hereafter" he determines, after the first thrill has died away, that he will have nothing to do with the temptation that the words offer to him. He says:

"If chance will have me king why chance may crown me
Without my stir."

And only three lines later he strengthens that with

"Come what come may,
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day."

That seems to be following the second type of ignoring the supernatural by being, or trying to be, indifferent to it. But what happens almost immediately? Malcolm is named Prince of Cumberland, and Macbeth, realizing that this puts an end to what may have been a strong possibility of the crown's coming peacefully to him, exclaims:

"The Prince of Cumberland, that is a step
On which I must fall down or else o'erleap,
For in my way it lies."

To commit himself to this o'erleaping he changes his action to the first type, obeying the prophecy by trying to do away with all that opposed its fulfillment. So he goes on helping to fulfill through the entire rising action of the play; and when that unnecessary crime which marks the turning point holds in itself a threatening failure in the escape of Fleance, Macbeth for the first time fears that his obedience to the supernatural has in it some flaw. So, this time of his own accord, he seeks out the witches, and they give him for his discomfort the apparition of the long

line of kings, of Banquo's sons, that shall succeed him, and for his comfort the two assurances,

> "Macbeth shall never vanquished be until
> Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
> Shall come against him,"
> and
> "Laugh to scorn
> The power of man, for none of woman born
> Shall harm Macbeth."

Macbeth confides blindly in the apparent meaning of these words; in the sense of absolutely relying on them and acting on that reliance, he does obey them; and his action continues of the first type. Confident that Birnam wood can never march upon his castle he shuts himself up there, — and so the English army comes. Confident that he can never be hurt by any one born of woman, he murders right and left — and so his subjects leave him to reinforce the English ranks. Without realizing it at all, he is winding up his own fate, although he believes that his fate lies safe in the hands of supernatural powers who are protecting him.

Unfortunately in this attitude of obedience there is an element, on his part, of willfulness. Really his wish to kill Fleance is his desire to frustrate a part of the witches' oracles, an attempt to make "assurance doubly sure." So here, with his disobedience, the Irony of Fate begins its work. The element of mockery in the witches we have always felt from the very beginning of the play, having the reader's and the author's omniscience, and having seen and heard the witches at their evil pastimes as Macbeth never saw them.

So we are ready to find irony in every success that they apparently allow Macbeth. There is irony in the killing of Duncan because Malcolm and Donalbain escape, only to come back later and do their part in fulfilling Macbeth's destiny. There is irony in the death of Banquo because Fleance still lives; for the "worm that 's fled hath nature" or natural inclination, which "in time will venom breed." There is irony in the putting to death of Macduff's wife and children simply to quiet the witches' warning "Beware Macduff," because the plot failed, in Macduff's absence from Fife, to do anything more than stir him up to speedy vengeance upon Macbeth. There is irony in the prophecy about Birnam wood, for in the simplest and most natural way the English forces conceal themselves with its branches and the "moving forest" comes to Dunsinane. Relying in desperation upon the last oracle, Macbeth, fighting against the desperate Macduff, hears from his lips the words,

> "Despair thy charm;
> And let the angel whom thou still hast served,
> Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
> Untimely ripped."

Fate is a mocker; and Macbeth, realizing this, at last, as we did at first, drops his sword, curses the "juggling fiends" "that palter with us in a double sense," and says he will not fight. But Macduff's taunt, "Coward," brings back to him that courage that a tragic hero must hold to the end, and he cries,

> "Lay on, Macduff,
> And damned be him that first cries 'Hold, enough!'"

But he realizes at this last moment that every word the Weird Sisters spoke to him was ironical, and that the attitude he took toward their prophecies, whether blind obedience or opposition, served only to bring his doom upon him. Then must he also have realized that the clear soul could escape only by trusting something so much higher that opposition to the supernatural, — the third type, — would be its only possible attitude.

In ancient tragedies oracles revealed to men their destinies; as pagan religions vanished, oracles became dumb; but Christianity did not wholly silence in the ears of men the solicitings of the supernatural. Demons and witches, dreams, apparitions, ghosts, voices, last still: and still seem to men to reveal their hidden futures. Shakespeare's age, of course far more than this, trusted to these things; and so he used them in his tragedies.

This does not mean, however, that he is pagan in his use of them, for the cosmic retribution that he constructs for his tragic heroes is always true to the Christian idea of moral law. So the witches are more than witches and the apparitions more than the stuff of superstition, — they are Universal Temptation, Yielding, and Retribution. And Macbeth is any man who listens too easily to voices he would most gladly hear, most evilly follow, and, — when the following brings disaster, — most bitterly blame. Like thousands of others the growth of his ambition is a series of natural steps; the career of his ambition an unreasoning orgy of license and waywardness; and the decline of his ambition, perfectly balancing its rise, is first a shaken confidence in self and then a complete

surrender to the self-destruction of self, the "natural nemesis by which vice courts its own doom."

Shakespeare's idea of the moral order of the world was the simple and true one — "what a man sows that shall he reap"; and the tragedy lies not in his destroying what belonged to others — property, character, or life — but in the destruction of what belonged to himself — the gift of God — his own spirit. That he should retain something of this spark, that it should give one bright flash before it dies, is essential to the greatness of tragedy; for it stirs both our pity and our admiration for the hero, to have, at the last second, a revelation and reminder of what he was once. Milton, for this reason, gave us the unconquerable Satan, and Shakespeare, for the same reason, the fighting Macbeth, both "beating through the dark and never losing one inch of a tack," for one moment, agonizingly aware of their own self-destruction, splendidly heroic, splendidly tragic.

THE DRAMATIC CONSTRUCTION OF MACBETH

Shakespeare's dramatic form leads us back to the laws of Aristotle, as he in turn found them illustrated in the tragedies of Æschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles.

He accepted the classic model of five acts for a drama. He furthermore followed it in using the first act for exposition of the situation and characters, the second and third for developing characters and plot to a climax which should be in the third or possibly early in the fourth act, the fourth and fifth for a gradual downward fall of action toward the final catastrophe and dénouement.

This is his law, especially in his tragedies; but in none is the form so sharply and accurately proportioned up to the climax and down from the climax as in "Macbeth." In comparison with "Hamlet" there are in "Macbeth" really few philosophical discussions to express dramatically. In comparison with "The Merchant of Venice" there is a single story rather than four, to be put in dramatic form; and it flows evenly in a single line bent to artistic symmetrical forms.

No form is so symmetrical as that of the perfect arch. Imagine then the five acts making such an arch, with the keystone exactly in the center. As a matter of fact the central act of the five acts is the third; the third act contains five scenes, of which the central scene is the third; therefore the keystone is Act III, Scene iii. This is the scene in which Banquo is killed and Fleance escapes. The death of Banquo is the last of Macbeth's successes; the

escape of Fleance is the first of a long line of failures which end only when Macbeth is overcome. This scene, then, is the exact climax and the exact turning point.

From the first scene of the first act Macbeth has risen by a series of crimes, apparently successful, to the point where he dares plot two murders, not because they are necessary to his being king, but simply because, as he says, he fears the loyalty of Banquo's nature, and is jealous of the prophecy of the Weird Sisters that Banquo's sons, not his, should be kings of Scotland. To plan murders for the possession of the coveted throne may, if successfully carried out, easily be the dramatic material for mounting action; the transition from murder for the sake of overcoming a real obstacle to murder for the sake of overcoming an imaginary obstacle in the future is, of course, the dramatic turning point in the man's career; and right at that point Nemesis begins its work of downfall.

In the falling action of the play we have a series of failures and disasters, and the final Nemesis comes personified in the avenging Macduff. What Banquo is to the rising action of the first half of the play, Macduff is to the falling action of the second half, the rising action being a series of crimes whose retributions are the material of the falling action. And the arch is completed when all hopes upon which Macbeth relied in the first half prove traitor to him in the second half; and, deserted by even the supernatural upon which his mounting hopes so strongly relied, he dies at the hand of the man whom above all others he had so needlessly and shamelessly wronged.

This is not saying that Shakespeare planned a perfect arch with a keystone which should be the turning point

of his play; but it is saying that he knew that a career of crime is naturally balanced by a course of retribution. It is a play full of "sound and fury," and that sound and fury are evenly balanced by the hero's suffering from the realization that they "signify nothing."

The symmetry that was so dear to the Greeks is perfect in this play, but perfect not so much because the dramatist was conscious of it as a matter of form, as he was conscious that the cosmic law is that evil shall be balanced in actual life by punishment, that the pendulum shall swing as far backward as it has been pressed forward, or, simply, that action and reaction are equal and opposite in direction. There were some Greek laws of the drama which Shakespeare felt free to refuse as limitations: — why should he, in Elizabethan England, confine himself to the Unity of Time, limiting the action of a play to what might in reality happen within twenty-four hours; or to the Unity of Place, limiting the action to one scene? Those were laws conditioned entirely by peculiarities of the Greek stage and production.

The great law of the drama, the Unity of Action, requiring that the play should be firmly molded around one great central event, he never dreamed of discarding; and keeping that law gave perfection and symmetry to the form of "Macbeth." In comparison with the weaving together of the four stories in "The Merchant of Venice," each with its own climax, and each entering and leaving the play without any symmetrical relationship to the others, the form of "Macbeth" rises like a single mountain peak "out-topping knowledge."

THE VALUE OF CHARACTER CONTRAST IN MACBETH

There is another special interest, however, in "Macbeth" quite as engrossing as that of its perfect structure; that is, the wonderful portrayal of contrast in character — a contrast brought into startling vividness in a situation in which two natures different but perfectly complementary are bound together in a common enterprise. There are, of course, character contrasts in all of Shakespeare's plays, but there is none so striking as this. When one speaks the name of the play, one thinks, first of all, not of witches, nor of murder, nor of ghosts, but of those two figures living from scene to scene side by side — Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

Every play has its own peculiar point that engrosses our attention: "Richard III" is a study in ideal villainy; "The Merchant of Venice" is a study of the conflict of two great ethical systems; "As You Like It" is a study of different types of humor in rebellion against conventional life; "Hamlet" is a study of an original spirit fighting against all philosophies and religions. So "Macbeth" is preëminently a study in the contrast between two lives; and, what is more complex, a contrast between the outer and the inner life of each.

At first thought, character contrast does not seem anything more than one of the simplest forms of arousing dramatic interest; and that has been done in a hundred plays. But in only one has it been so subtle and so marvelously consistent that it is the beginning and end of

all interest and the one haunting impression long after the fifth act closes.

Since Professor Moulton's publication, in 1906, of his essay entitled "Macbeth, Lord and Lady," [1] no commentator has been able to say anything new on this topic and none has been able to forget, or neglect, any of his fine distinctions. What follows here is only a simplification of his idea since the book is not generally available for students. It starts with the simple working basis that Macbeth is, when the play opens, essentially a man of action and of experience in affairs,— affairs meaning in those days, of course, mostly war and the material concerns of a thane of wealth and power and position.

In those days the genius of men found its scope in the outer world, or the practical, and less than in our day were men concerned with problems of the inner life. Macbeth is in outer life a giant, but in his inner life proves to be, as the play progresses, a mere child. Such a contrast Shakespeare could make most effective up to the last moment of his hand to hand fight with Macduff.

On the other hand, what of a woman of those days,— a woman who had possibilities of greatness and was not framed to be merely a possession of her lord? In what could her spirit find scope? She must perforce spend much of her life in her own castle, watching her lord go forth to war, then waiting for his return. What she was would depend entirely upon what she thought and did while waiting. The play reveals to us that Lady Macbeth spent these hours not in idle vanity, but that she had ated and settled for herself many a problem

[1] "Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist" (Oxford, 1906).

of life, reduced perhaps, when we come to count them, to those two things which are always the great concerns of a woman's life — birth and death.

The children that had died in infancy Macbeth could forget in battle; but Lady Macbeth brooded over death until she had worked out her own acceptance of it,— "the sleeping and the dead are but as pictures." At one great crisis this stands her in good stead; it sustains her afterward through the stormy years described in the play. She also had discovered her own weaknesses; she knew that tenderness often betrays strength and therefore must sometimes be trampled under foot if the enterprise in hand is to be carried through. She has as much force as Macbeth but it is a force born in a different sphere, and it might never have shown so sharply in contrast to his, had not a common ambition demanding co-operation started the two into action side by side.

Macbeth, as a man of action, is impetuous, imperious, accustomed to obedience, used to carrying out his every plan regardless of consequences; but he has never troubled himself to face any moral problem or any great moral crisis, and when he creates these for himself he finds himself strangely inadequate. He is not a good man worked upon by ambition, or by witches, or, according to the old accepted point of view, by an over-ambitious wife; he is rather a man who wants what he wants; and, if assured that the consequences will not make him pay too dearly, immediately he goes about to get what he wants. His morality is most conventional and traditional, but a love of the good for its own sake is not in him.

Lady Macbeth herself in her wonderful analysis of his character, in the fifth scene of the first act, says that he is "too full o' the milk of human kindness." If human kindness is written as one word it takes the simple meaning of human nature, as if it were written humankind-ness. That is, she thinks that he is too much like all other human beings to dare attain the thing he wishes unless it accords with his conventional idea of morality. She realizes that something greater than mere humankind-ness is needed for their success. It is fair to read the word this way because is there any place in the play where Macbeth shows any kindness in the other sense?

And does not Shakespeare use the words kind, kindly, and kindness, meaning usually that which is merely natural? She describes him as wishing to be great and having ambition, but lacking the courage to carry out his ambition.

"What thou wouldst highly
That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,
And yet wouldst wrongly win: thou 'ldst have, great Glamis,
That which cries 'Thus thou must do, if thou have it,'
And that which rather thou dost fear to do
Than wishest should be undone."

That is, Macbeth has no objection to evil because it is evil but he has objection to ill report and disgrace. Is this not the very meaning of ordinary humankind-ness?

When Macbeth himself sums up the reasons why he should not murder the king, they, too, are altogether conventional. He is afraid of retribution, he is afraid of

the life to come, he is afraid that if he kills the king he may teach others by example how to kill him when he becomes king. He objects to murdering Duncan on grounds of loyalty, blood relationship, gratitude for honors bestowed, and pity. But never does he abhor the deed because it is an outrage to human life or because it is forbidden by God. He rather seems to regret that he has not some stronger motive than "Vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself and falls on the other side."

His is not a searching examination of himself,— he is not acquainted with his inner nature; it is just an examination of what is likely to happen if by treachery he seizes the crown. Contemplation, periods of thinking like this all through the play render him almost helpless; but when there is a deed to perform, something to be actually done, he is a man again and at home in action. This and this alone could account for those many highly colored soliloquies in which he seems before the acting of an evil thing to glory with an almost poetic enthusiasm in the setting for his crime. The darkness of that night when "o'er the one half-world nature seemed dead" did seem to give him spirit and assurance.

Moulton says, "The man who had been frightened from the table of his guests by the mere thought of a crime, moves to the deed itself with the exalted language of a Hebrew prophet." When the deed is done, however, he returns from the king's chamber a child again in inaction, whimpering because he cannot say "Amen" to the prayers of the grooms. The great difficulty lies right here, — that any career of action necessarily has its pauses of inaction or reaction. In these, strength of

inner life is needed. Without it a man is helpless in times of suspense and most likely to betray himself.

The old-fashioned idea of Lady Macbeth was, of course, that she was a fiend. "His fiend-like queen," Malcolm calls her, at the end of the play. But the text shows her clearly as a woman of insight into character; she knows Macbeth far better than he knows himself; her imagination is quick and vivid, and a source of great suffering as well as great exaltation to her. Experience has given it many pictures to harbor.

At our first sight of her, in the fifth scene of the first act, we understand at once that she is accustomed to make a fixed decision and to hold everything unwaveringly to it. "Shalt be what thou art promised" is the quick conclusion of her reading of the letter concerning the witches, and with this conclusion all the rest of her action throughout the play is consistent. Quivering nerves, shaking tenderness, pitiful sense of blood-stained hands, more pitiful recognition later of the whole moral disintegration of her lord, keep her before us always as a woman of delicate sensibilities, not a "fiend."

She has no conventional compunctions against killing Duncan. She reasons with a peculiar morality that, since they have agreed that they want Duncan out of the way and his crown upon their heads, it is cowardly, weak, immoral for them to draw back, *still wishing*, when the opportunity of seizing the crown comes to them. It is a terrible thing continually to want to do an evil act and continually to hold back through fear. And this terrible thing is the evil that she is keeping Macbeth from, according to her way of thinking, but which we forget

when we say that she drove him to the crime. This faltering, to her, is unmanly and mean; and as for crying about virtue, she feels that he renounced that long ago when he first entertained an evil ambition.

Before the play opens all this is established, for Macbeth had as much right to the crown as Duncan, and plainly he and Lady Macbeth had discussed possibilities of the future frankly together.

"What beast was't then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?"

she says, at that crisis in the seventh scene of the first act, when he is so near to refusing to commit the murder. So the idea of the crime was plainly his: and hers was the terrible task of holding him to what he had agreed to do. To have done this through a period possibly of years would be enough in itself to develop her will and her inner strength.

Then the play opens and carries us through periods of temptation, of perpetration of crime, of attempts at concealment, and of final retribution. Is the contrast between a woman strong in the inner life and a man strong in outer action held consistently through these four phases? If it is, we can hardly deny that this contrast is Shakespeare's own great dramatic interest in writing this tragedy.

It must be to serve this purpose of contrast that Shakespeare brings immediate temptation to Macbeth and Lady Macbeth when they are apart from each other. Macbeth feels it closing in around him in the consciousness of his success in battle and the king's weak

inactivity, in the plaudits of the soldiers at his victory, and much more in the prophecy of the witches. So closely does this last reveal his innermost thoughts that he gives a perceptible start that rivets the attention of Banquo, to whom the predictions seem only interesting and curious.

Shakespeare had no intention of giving us a hero whose character could be turned from good to evil by the agency of the supernatural merely; but the man has played with evil so long that even slight sparks start a blaze. Suddenly to him it seems that his dream of years might become a reality. Have not the powers of darkness told him that his fate lies in that direction? His mind is not disciplined enough in thought to give the supernatural as little value as belongs normally to it.

In contrast, upon Lady Macbeth the supernatural makes hardly any impression. She reads her husband's letter in the fourth scene, with excitement intense enough to crush it in her hand when she has finished, clinching her fingers with the rigid determination that her lord shall have what has been promised, — shall have it by his activity and her help, not by waiting in passive expectancy for the supernatural to bring it. Just as she has finished the torture of thinking that Macbeth may not have the courage to seize this opportunity, the messenger enters to say that the king comes to her castle that night. That is her great moment. She is racked with feeling, and knows that Duncan's entrance under her battlements is to be fatal. It is the opportunity that makes her temptation — and the suddenness of the opportunity is a shock.

The great day, so intensely desired, is at hand, and she sees the deed in a moment. Her prayer to be unsexed and filled with cruelty is a wonderful reflection of what she really is, — a gentlewoman through and through, — and of what she must be changed into if she is to use the keen knife. At the height of her cry for help in doing what she knows her soul will abhor, Macbeth enters, and the moment her eyes meet his she starts on her terrible but devoted mission of holding him to his ambition. Right here at the end of the fifth scene and throughout the seventh there is a period of suspense which again brings them into contrast.

Macbeth's face, she says, "is as a book where men may read strange matters." For fear he may waver she pleads with him to put the "night's great business" into her dispatch, only, himself, to bear welcome to the king and leave all the rest to her. The king comes and she greets him with wonderfully controlled courtesy. Such gentleness of breeding, such concern for hospitality, such careful acknowledgment of late favors, whether they be sincere or not, no "fiend" could voice. Then, missing Macbeth from the supper chamber, she finds him weak, dissolved, at the end of his speech in which he counted the reasons against killing his king.

This is a moment of appalling danger to her. She appeals to his love, taunts him with cowardice, compares his present wavering with the manliness he had when he "broke the enterprise" to her, and finally avows that she would kill her smiling babe rather than be, as he is, on the point of cowardly refraining from a deed to which he had sworn his allegiance. There is nothing left for Mac-

beth to say but, "If we should fail?" Then she gives him an outline of every detail in the carrying out of the murder, even to the putting of the guilt upon the sleeping grooms.

And the man of action, with the details of action supplied him, and with the weight of decision taken from his own shoulders, suddenly finds himself again strong and settled to the terrible feat. Lady Macbeth is strongest here, at the outset, and Macbeth is feeblest. The strength of her trained mind can see every step of the way; but the delicacy of her mind, together with delicacy of body and sensitiveness of soul, could not endure the physical enactment of those steps.

So, in the carrying out of the deed she passes to weakness as Macbeth passes to strength. The taking of a stimulant to give herself fire shows she knew she would be weak when the actual bloodshed began. She waits in the court for Macbeth to come back from the king's chamber, agonized with fear that he may not succeed, agonized that she herself could not murder the king when she had gone into his room to lay the daggers ready. She could not because he resembled her sleeping father. This is not the compunction of a "fiend."

Then as Macbeth comes staggering back, there are only two words that she can say, and they tax the powers of any actor of the part, for they mean a thousand things in one, "My husband!" There is a quick moment of hysterical questioning and answering between them, for Macbeth, the deed done, is a baby again and needs all kinds of assurances that the grooms did not wake, and that he did not hear them cry "God bless us," and that

there is no time for him to debate why he could not say "Amen." The woman's trained mind must again fill in the gap, — strangely enough this time the exhortation not to think so "brain-sickly of things" has also to be strengthened by furnishing a direction for action:

"Go get some water
And wash this filthy witness from your hands."

But there is another complication. What desperate anxiety in

"Why did you bring these daggers from the place?"

He refuses to carry them back; again she forces her unstrung nerves to fill up the gap. Her trained mind comes to the rescue. She has seen death before. She has her own philosophy about it. She says it is the "eye of childhood that fears a painted devil," and with what may possibly be a hysterical pun, *gild* and *guilt*, she carries the daggers back to the sleeping grooms. She returns to find Macbeth crying over the blood upon his hands. She tries to quiet him with

"My hands are of your color but I shame
To wear a heart so white,"

and when this does not avail, gives again a practical suggestion,

"A little water clears us of this deed,

* * * * * * * *

Get on your nightgown lest occasion call us
And show us to be watchers."

And how exactly she puts her finger upon his weakness, and yet how tenderly, when with "Be not lost so poorly

in your thoughts," she leads him away from the ominous knocking at the gate. So it was that the strength of her inner life came to their rescue and instinctively furnished to the man of outer life such practical details as made him immediately capable of action.

In the time of first concealment of the crime, when the castle is aroused to the news of the murder of the king, Macbeth seems much more at home than Lady Macbeth. He is dealing with men, he is concealing something from men of his own rank. He acts the part of innocence fairly well and carries everything along successfully until he announces that he was the one who killed the grooms. His defense of that murder, when Macduff questions him, shows that this was the mistake that might wreck the whole scheme. Without this, Lady Macbeth's plan would have worked perfectly.

There is silence after Macbeth's defense, a silence that is ominous until Lady Macbeth cries, " Help me hence." Is she appalled at the risk he has taken, and is her woman's delicacy so shocked by the thought of additional bloodshed that she faints naturally? Or is she again calling the strength of her mind to serve them in a pretended faint that shall distract attention from her husband? If the former, she showed wonderful control in holding out to the last moment; if the latter, she showed wonderful instinct in choosing the critical moment to create the diversion. Her fainting saved the situation. The sons of Duncan fly almost immediately and Lord and Lady Macbeth are crowned king and queen at Scone.

In the longer period of concealment — that period that covers the rest of the play — Macbeth's longing

for action and for those moments of feeling at home because he has "great deeds in hand" proves to be his downfall. He acts simply because he cannot keep still and face suspense. That is the real reason for Banquo's murder, and the real reason why he does not tell his plan to Lady Macbeth, who, he knows, would oppose it. Her way would be to wait for an opportunity of getting rid of Banquo if it was necessary.

But waiting is the one thing that Macbeth can never do. Into this longer time of concealment comes the whole of their retribution. Macbeth has relied in the beginning upon the supernatural, so his punishment comes largely from that realm. He faces Banquo's ghost as if he knew that it was his retribution. He has not the trained mind to reason about the ghost consistently. Lady Macbeth, true to her character, fights even then when it seems hopeless to keep up appearances for him. It is a beautiful revealing of her nature when, at the banquet, finding that her questions do not recall him to his senses, she protects him from the curiosity of his guests, dismisses them, and hurries them away.

When they have left the room she is all love as she leads him, as one leads a child, away to sleep, "the season of all natures." There is a whole picture of Lady Macbeth's love for her husband in scattered passages like these which we must take into account in appreciating her character. Tactics that she uses before others she drops for pure tenderness when she is with him alone. This was one of the hundred meanings in "My husband!" when he came from Duncan's bedside. She dedicated herself then to protect him with all the strength of her mind and heart forever.

As the months go on, her mind gradually breaks. We know that it breaks over just one thing, — that murder in which she was forced to take a physical part, for all her ravings are centered on that which was most repellent to her nature and which only her strength of mind could enforce her to endure, — blood. All the ravings about her hands, the wife of the Thane of Fife, the putting on of their nightgowns, the starting of her lord at the feast, show that night after night she had been living through these scenes; and the terrible struggle to keep her husband from betrayal added its own greater weight to their horror. Her sighs and cries come from a "sorely charged heart," a woman's heart not a "fiend's." The mind on which she had depended finally breaks and we are practically told that she takes her own life.

Macbeth's suffering in retribution is consistent, too. His mind is still no help to him for it still works along the path of fear and regret and the emptiness of life. There is irony in every seeming success. So little happiness has the crown brought him that he has looked back with longing upon Duncan, sleeping peacefully "after life's fitful fever." The death of Banquo held only a sting, for Fleance escaped and his issue is to inherit the throne.

Suddenly, too, he suffers from the supernatural, for, going to the witches for comfort, he receives only equivocal promises which in the end betray him. When Macduff tells him that he is in reality "no man of woman born" Macbeth sees, for the first time because his poorly trained mind could not foresee it, that he is doomed. Like a man of action he fights still with an old time trust

in bravery. Crying "Lay on, Macduff, and damned be him that first cries 'Hold enough,'" he enters a long, bitter, desperate, hand to hand fight, — a picture which brings vividly back to us the reports of his valiant courage against the enemy, in the first scenes. His feet slide, he fights on his knees, his sword is struck from his hand. The man of action has died in action.

The contrast in the natures and experiences of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth is carried out consistently even to their deaths. Both are admirable in their strength and both their forms of courage are necessary to the accomplishment of their plans. Both are pitiful, too, in their weakness. Her strength of soul has no counterpart in physical strength; his bodily vigor has no counterpart in spiritual force. But what each lacks the other supplies and that perfect partnership works with a terrible resistless force toward their common ruin. Her last thought in the sleepwalking scene is for him; his deepest grief is for her death, — devoted lovers throughout their whole career.

VERSE AND PROSE IN MACBETH

What form of verse did Shakespeare use? Apparently a simple question, simply answered with: all of Shakespeare's plays were written in blank verse, — iambic pentameter without rhyme. But in reality there is romance in the words "blank verse" and "Shakespeare" written together — a romance of such beauty as engages all our wonder, if we will only see it apart from the barren technicalities of meter and rhyme.

Shakespeare admired Marlowe's verse: — he felt all its power and volume and its kind of sublimity. So he made Marlowe's line his ship of adventures and started on his own voyage of discovery. At first his venturings were cautious: he stopped his sentences at the end of the line — "end-stopped line"; he gave to every line a rhythm like that of every other; he made the last syllables of all his lines strong and accented, — as "vault" and "oak," masculine endings: and of course a certain monotonous tune showed, in spite of many passages of sheer beauty, in the earliest plays. The number of rhyming lines in these plays seems to indicate that he is not bold enough wholly to discard conventional rhyme.

Then he began to sail more fearlessly: his lines often "ran over," feminine endings appear — as "vaulting" and "oak-leaf," rhyme appeared much less often; and this variety in his newer manner gave the effect not of a

single tune, but of a music varying with the quality of what it wanted to express. This change is apparent enough if we compare almost any passage in the early comedies with almost any one from the later. Let us take two that have the same kind of beauty to express.

" But love, first learnéd in a lady's eyes,
Lives not alone immuréd in the brain;
But with the motion of all elements,
Courses as swift as thought in every power,
And gives to every power a double power,
Above their functions and their offices.
It adds a precious seeing to the eye, —
A lover's eyes will gaze an eagle blind;
A lover's ear will hear the lowest sound,
When the suspicious head of theft is stopped:
Love's feeling is more soft, and sensible,
Than are the tender horns of cockled snails:
Love's tongue proves dainty Bacchus gross in taste:
For valour is not Love a Hercules,
Still climbing trees in the Hesperides?
Subtle as sphinx; as sweet and musical
As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair;
And, when Love speaks, the voice of all the gods
Makes heaven drowsy with the harmony.
Never durst poet touch a pen to write,
Until his ink were temper'd with Love's sighs:
O, then his lines would ravish savage ears,
And plant in tyrants mild humility."

— Love's Labour's Lost, IV, iii.

"Now, my fairest friend,
I would I had some flowers o' the spring, that might
Become your time of day; — and yours, and yours,
That wear upon your virgin branches yet
Your maidenheads growing: — O Proserpina,
For the flowers now, that, frighted, thou let'st fall
From Dis's waggon! daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty; violets, dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses,
That die unmarried, ere they can behold
Bright Phœbus in his strength, — a malady
Most incident to maids; bold oxlips, and
The crown-imperial; lilies of all kinds,
The flower-de-luce being one! O, these I lack,
To make you garlands of; and my sweet friend,
To strew him o'er and o'er!

Flo. What, like a corse?

Per. No, like a bank, for love to lie and play on;
Not like a corse; or if, — not to be buried,
But quick, and in mine arms. Come, take your flowers:
Methinks I play as I have seen them do
In Whitsun-pastorals: sure, this robe of mine
Does change my disposition.

Flo. What you do
Still betters what is done. When you speak, sweet,
I 'd have you do it ever: when you sing,
I 'd have you buy and sell so; so give alms;
Pray so; and, for the ordering your affairs,

To sing them too: when you do dance, I wish you
A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do
Nothing but that; move still, still so,
And own no other function: each your doing,
So singular in each particular,
Crowns what you are doing in the present deeds,
That all your acts are queens."

— The Winter's Tale, IV, iii.

These two passages lie some twenty years apart in Shakespeare's writing. There is beauty in both of them. There is to the eye the same form in both. But what a difference is there, when they are read aloud! Now Shakespeare wrote not for the eye to read, but for the ear to hear, — verse to be spoken aloud and to be spoken by human beings under the stress of some strong feeling. Would not he inevitably see that all that made for regularity in lines and endings would make against the natural life-like ways of human speech? If he set his sails to that wind of "truth to nature" would he toss without compass upon the sea? Possibly he may have questioned himself in some such way. If so, his answer evidently was in the spirit of his time — "I 'll take the adventure."

He did, — and his ship sailed beautifully — bent to the winds of feeling as they blew — but steadily keeping its course. His blank verse did what no poet's before had done — combined the melody, the loftiness, the dignity, the sublimity of poetry with the simple naturalness of human speech. So do his later plays surpass his earlier — in growing closer to nature, while losing none of the perfection of technical points — the life experience

of any artist. As a young artist he was controlled by his medium; through experience he became master, and played with it as he willed.

This freedom from form for the sake of getting closer to nature shows us in "Macbeth" many instances of what we are likely to speak of as irregularities in the verse. These are, of course, quite different from imperfections caused by errors or gaps in copy. Often these errors have been spoken of in the notes — but it is only the intentional irregularities that we are here concerned with.

The first great class we may call the "broken line." Take, for example, Act I, Scene v. There are in that scene eighteen broken lines; but in every case but one the unfinished last line of a speech finishes itself with the broken line at the beginning of the following speech, the two together forming the perfect pentameter. Why should Lady Macbeth, in the intense excitement of this moment when she hears of the coming of Duncan, finish any speech with the complete five accented lines? Would a real Lady Macbeth be so controlled? Then, logically, of course, one might ask why should the next speaker have to be careful to begin his speech with just enough accents to complement her broken line? True, he should not; but does not the beginning of a speech admit naturally of more temperate, measured expression? And since, after all, Shakespeare *is* writing blank verse, must he not perfect the line — but perfect it in the finest way possible? So "To have thee crowned withal" and "What is your tidings?" make one complete pentameter line; so do "The king comes here to-night," and "Thou 'rt mad to say it." We can go through the entire scene in this

way with no difficulty except an apparent one in line 32, which can be made perfect by reading "preparation" as a word of five distinct syllables.

But there are some broken lines that cannot be mended so easily: in Act I, Scene ii, line 41, we have only "I cannot tell" and a complete line following. Here, of course, the break, punctuated by the dash, is significant of the breathlessness of the boy, — but there is no evidence that Shakespeare ever did that intentionally without giving the full complement in the following line. One text makes the line read, "I cannot tell: but I am faint," which gives us only four accents and leaves dangling "My gashes cry for help." So there is evidently something lost here. So is there in line 51, "With terrible numbers." And in Act II, Scene ii, there is something either lost or put in, for the agitated questions of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth will not come perfectly into the measure of five beats. But for the most part one may easily verify for himself by scanning a page of the text here and there, that the really imperfect lines are very few. Shakespeare surely kept to his pattern, but his indifference about the preservation of his manuscripts as surely marred what was once perfect. Occasionally a group of short lines like the following seems impossible to handle:

> "For ever knit.
> Ride you this afternoon?
> Ay, my good lord."

We can make the first two together form a perfect pentameter; or the last two. So the middle line does double service, and has been named by some critics, "amphib-

ious" — literally meaning "leading a double life," hence "doing double duty." But there is a theory, also, that these are what may be called "legitimate short lines"; that single lines of four or five, or six or seven syllables, instead of ten, are in the intentional scheme of Shakespeare's verse. If so, Shakespeare was even freer with his medium than is ordinarily believed.

As with the word "preparation" already cited, so there are many instances when a word must be contracted or lengthened, or its natural accent thrown forward or backward to fit the meter. Here are two where the words are lengthened into three syllables:

"The newest state. This is the ser-ge-ant."

"Our cap-ta-ins, Macbeth and Banquo."

In the following the words must be contracted:

"Hover (hov'r) through the fog and filthy air,"

"I 'll be myself the harbinger (harbing'r) and make happy."

"Of horrid hell can come a devil (dev'l) more damned."

For the same reason of meter the natural accent is changed in the following:

"Or memorize another Golgotha,"

"Till Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill."

In such lines as

"Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make,"

and

"So they doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe,"

there is much slurring to be done with nimble tongue to make the lines smooth pentameters. But just such adjustments of our voices to our ears that hear inwardly the beating of rhythm of the measure are what we are thinking of when we say that Shakespeare and the Bible are the two best tests of good reading.

But would Shakespeare invariably bind himself to the pentameter, or would his instinct demand now and then another meter for some definite artistic purpose? The first scene of the first act he has plainly written with only four accents in a line; so has he written the third scene; and so the fifth scene of the third act, and the first part of Act IV, Scene i. Moreover, the accent is decidedly changed — thrown back to the first syllable of each foot, as —

"Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed,"

making the line trochaic tetrameter, instead of iambic pentameter. The whole point is, who is speaking? Witches, supernatural beings, "on the earth but not of it," therefore speaking a language of their own, to a rhythm of their own. The rhythm they choose is in contrast to the dignified pentameter, natural to their perverted minds agog over some mischief; and in the dance around the cauldron it suggests the very vibration of the

apparitions that they raise. We are conscious immediately of a change whenever they speak; it is in the meter, and it is a change not accidental but intentional. In the fifth scene of the third act Hecate's speeches are, indeed, in iambic measure. Is this really Middleton's "working over," or Shakespeare's "borrowing," or Shakespeare's idea that the leader of the witches should speak differently from them, more as the human beings speak, and yet with the four beat rhythm of the supernatural beings? It is a question.

The most interesting departure from the blank verse, however, is the scenes, or parts of scenes, that are written in prose. These, too, are not casual but designed. The first change to prose is in Macbeth's letter, in Act I, Scene v, and it needs no explanation — letters are composed in prose, especially a hurried letter like this written in a moment snatched from the whirl and excitement of hard fighting.

The next is the porter scene in Act II, Scene iii. Here a drunken porter talks. A drunken porter might talk in rhythm from the very fact that he is drunk. But this porter not so much talks as grumbles, scolds, in spasmodic phrases, as he gets into his clothes and out into the courtyard. But more than this Shakespeare was anxious here to let his audience drop from the awful pitch of agony in Macbeth's "Wake Duncan with thy knocking, I would thou could'st," and the long strain of emotion that preceded it. What better way than for a befuddled clown to appear and jabber in befuddled prose that gives us a rude jostling with the outside world again?

Appendix.

The scene as the Elizabethans were able to take it, word for word, would be offensive to us to-day — but we can appreciate the change of key and the real relief, — largely due to the fall from poetry to prose. It is one of the most amazing things in letters to read through Schiller's alteration of this porter scene when he made his German version of "Macbeth." His porter is a lofty religious character, "the very jingling of whose keys calls to prayer like Sabbath bells."

"*Porter* (*singing*). The gloomy night is past and gone,
The lark sings clear; I see the dawn,
With heaven its splendor blending,
Behold the sun ascending:
His light, it shines in royal halls,
And shines alike through beggar's walls,
And what the shades of night concealed
By his bright ray is now revealed. (*Knocking.*)
Knock! knock! have patience there, whoe'er it be,
And let the porter end his morning song.
'T is right God's praise should usher in the day;
No duty is more urgent than to pray, —
(*Singing.*) Let songs of praise and thanks be swelling
To God who watches o'er this dwelling,
And with his hosts of heavenly powers
Protects us in our careless hours.
Full many an eye has closed this night
Never again to see the light.
Let all rejoice who now can raise,
With strength renewed, to Heaven their gaze.
(*He unbars the gate. Enter* Macduff *and* Ross.)"

Merely to read it shows us Shakespeare's sure instinct as to "what not to do."

But prose is not always a fall — it has its lofty moments as well as verse. So in the sleepwalking scene, in Act V, we find the waiting woman and the doctor talking — whispering — in prose. Is not "whispering" the whole reason for their prose, as "asleep and dreaming" is the whole reason for Lady Macbeth's? There is an atmosphere of human intimacy here in the prose that gives the perfect dramatic effect to the scene. Some critics have thought that the whole scene is really blank verse, can be scanned as such, and should be printed so. Read it as such, and judge for yourself, if you can keep the whispered intensity as strong.

Hudson's note on this prose and the change at the end of the scene into the blank verse of the doctor's speech is most appreciative of what we all feel: "I suspect that the matter of this scene is too sublime, too austerely grand, to admit of anything so artificial as the measured language of verse; and that the Poet, as from an instinct of genius, felt that any attempt to heighten the effect by any arts of delivery would impair it. The very diction of the closing speech, nobly poetical as it is, must be felt by every competent reader as a letting down to a lower intellectual plane. Is prose then, after all, a higher style of speech than verse? There are parts of the New Testament which no possible arts of versification could fail to enfeeble." Nor could we feel anything but utter fitness in the natural prose of the light prattle of Macduff's boy with his mother. What stupidity it would have been to have allowed this child of

ten years to talk in a carefully measured ten-syllable line!

Shakespeare writes his plays in blank verse, yes — but he knows when not to. When supernatural beings speak, when a drunken porter mumbles, when a gay-hearted little boy chatters, when an anxious doctor and maid "stand close" and whisper as they watch an over-strained soul off guard, and when that suffering soul dreams aloud — are these not times for something really *different* from the *measured* beat, wonderful as that may be in its adaptability to every emotion?

COMMENTS UPON THE PLAY AND THE CHARACTERS

The books and essays written about Shakespeare far exceed what he himself wrote; and they are by no means yet ended, — each year sees a new one. In all of these much time is given to discussions of "Macbeth," for, next to "Hamlet," it has held the attention of the world. In Dr. Furness's "Variorum Edition of Macbeth" there are criticisms quoted as far back as Samuel Johnson's, and as recent as those of our own Shakespeare scholars, — Hudson, Rolfe, Sherman, White, and a host of others. These cover some hundred and fifty pages; and every one of them is stimulating, and many are wonderful pieces of writing in themselves. Here it is possible to quote only a few, chosen to throw different lights upon the play.

"'Macbeth' seems inspired by the very genius of the tempest. This drama shows us the gathering, the discharge, and the dispelling of a domestic and political storm, takes its peculiar hue from the individual character of the hero. It is not in the spirit of mischief that animates the 'weird sisters,' nor in the passionate and strong-willed ambition of Lady Macbeth, that we find the mainspring of this tragedy, but in the disproportioned though poetically tempered soul of Macbeth himself.

"A character like his, of extreme selfishness, with a most irritable fancy, must produce, even in ordinary circumstances, an excess of morbid apprehensiveness; which, however, as we see in him, is not inconsistent with the

greatest physical courage, but generates of necessity the most entire moral cowardice. When, therefore, a man like this, ill enough qualified even for the honest and straightforward transactions of life, has brought himself to snatch at an ambitious object by the commission of one great sanguinary crime, the new and false position in which he finds himself by his very success will but startle and exasperate him to escape, as Macbeth says, from 'horrible imaginings' by the perpetration of greater and greater actual horrors, till inevitable destruction comes upon him amidst universal execration.

"Such, briefly, are the story and moral of 'Macbeth.' The passionate ambition and indomitable will of his lady, through agents indispensable to urge such a man to the one decisive act which is to compromise him in his own opinion and that of the world, are by no means primary springs of the dramatic action. Nor do the 'weird sisters' themselves do more than aid collaterally in impelling a man, the inherent evil of whose nature and purpose has predisposed him to take their equivocal suggestions in the most mischievous sense. And, finally, the very thunder-cloud which, from the beginning almost to the ending, wraps this fearful tragedy in physical darkness and lurid glare, does but reflect and harmonize with the moral blackness of the piece."

— FLETCHER, "Studies of Shakespeare."

"Beside the main subject of the midnight murder of a King sleeping in the house of one of his nobles, and surrounded by his guards, the death and appearance of the ghost of Banquo, and the whole machinery and prophecy

of the wayward sisters, with the interior view of a castle in which is a conscience-stricken Monarch reduced to the extremity of a siege, the Poet seems to have intended to concentrate in this play many of the more thrilling incidents of physical and metaphysical action. The midnight shriek of women; sleep, with its stranger accidents, such as laughing, talking, walking, as produced by potions, as disturbed by dreams, as full of wicked thoughts; the hard beating of the heart; the parched state of the mouth in an hour of desperate guilt; the rousing of the hair at a dismal treatise; physiognomy; men of manly hearts moved to tears; the wild thoughts which haunt the mind of guilt, as in the air-drawn dagger, and the fancy that sleep was slain and the slayer should know its comforts no more; death in some of its stranger varieties, — the soldier dying of wounds not bound up, the spent swimmer, the pilot wrecked on his way home, the horrible mode of Macdonwald's death, the massacre of a mother and her children, the hired assassins perpetrating their work on the belated travellers, — these are but a portion of the terrible circumstances attendant on the main events of this tragic tale.

"He goes for similar circumstances to the elements, and to the habits of animals about which superstitions had gathered, — the flitting of the bat, the flight of the crow to the rooky wood, the flights of the owl and the falcon, and of the owl and the wren, the scream of the owl, the chirping of the cricket, the croak of the prophetic raven, and bark of the wolf, the horses devouring one another, the pitchy darkness of night, the murky darkness of a lurid day, a storm rattling in the battlements of an an-

cient fortress, — we have all this before we pass the bounds of nature and enter the regions of metaphysical agency.

"There we have the spirits which tend on mortal thoughts, the revelations by magot-pies, the moving of stones, the speaking of trees, and lamentings heard in the air, and almost the whole of the mythology of the wayward sisters, — their withered and wild attire, their intercourse with their Queen, their congregating in the hour of storms on heaths which the lightning has scathed, the strange instruments employed by them, the mode of their operations, and their compelling the world invisible to disclose the secrets of futurity."

— HUNTER, "New Illustrations of Shakespeare."

"'Macbeth' can be divided into two distinct worlds, which are the threads of the entire action — the supernatural and the natural. These terms are not completely antithetic, but they are sufficient to convey the meaning which is intended to be conveyed. The supernatural world is that of the Weird Sisters, who seem to enter the action from the outside and direct its course. They appear to Macbeth twice; the essential turning-points of his career are thus marked.

"The first time they incite him to guilt, the second time they lead him to retribution. . . . The natural world is composed of two well-defined groups. In the first are those whom the Weird Sisters determine — Banquo, Macbeth, and, less directly and less strongly, Lady Macbeth. They manifest a regular graduation in their relations towards this external power; Banquo resists its

temptations wholly; Lady Macbeth yields to them wholly or, rather, brings to their aid her own strength of will; Macbeth fluctuates — resisting at first, but finally yielding. These characters also manifest the influence of imagination with greater or less intensity; they have, in particular, the double element above mentioned, for they are impelled both by external shapes and by internal motives.

"The second group of the natural world comprises Duncan and the remaining persons of the play who do not come in contact with the Weird Sisters, nor are directly influenced by their utterances. But this group is, for the most part, set in motion by the first group of the natural world; both move along together at first, and then collide. The external element thus reaches the entire play; the first impulse is given by the Weird Sisters; is received by one set of characters; through these is transmitted to a still different set of characters, who finally react, punish the usurper, and restore the rightful king.

"The first group, it ought to be added, disintegrates within itself, for Banquo refuses to listen to the advances of Macbeth, seeks to avenge the murder of Duncan, and at last is destroyed by his comrade in arms. . . . Shakespeare has not introduced a double guilt into this drama; hence the fate of only one set of characters is adequately motived. For the death of Duncan, of Banquo, and of Macduff's family, there can be found no justification from their deeds.

"Critics have sought to make out a case against them, but without success. They have committed no ethical violation worthy of death; they are innocent beings over-

whelmed in a catastrophe from without; and this is deeply consistent with the form and movement of the play, which exhibits fate, — external determination. The Weird Sisters, the instruments of destiny, give Macbeth his impulse; he is driven upon these guiltless victims, who fall because they stand in the way of a mighty force.

"Such is the outward form, though it must not be thought that Macbeth is released from the responsibility of his act. The inner truth is that these shapes are himself — his own desires, his own ambition. The peculiarity of the present work is that the ethical elements, usually the most prominent, are withdrawn into the background to make room for another principle. . . . The main interest is psychological; the activities of the mind seem to leap at once into independent forms of the imagination. Although Macbeth knows abstractly of his own ambition, still his chief temptation seems to spring from the phantoms of the air; and, though an external punishment is brought to him, still his retribution as well as that of his wife is mainly found in the fantastic workings of the brain. Judging by its language, its treatment, its theme, we may call this play the Tragedy of the Imagination."

— SNIDER, "System of Shakespeare's Dramas."

"In an essay upon 'Macbeth' may be found the following passage of criticism, in the sceptical school (as usual), relative to the Ghost of Banquo: 'If we believe in the reality of the Ghost as a shape or shadow existent *without* the mind of Macbeth, and not exclusively within it, we shall have difficulties which may be put under two heads: — Why did the Ghost come? Why did he go,

on Macbeth's approach, and at his bidding? . . . It is clear from the scene that Macbeth drove it away, and also that he considered it as much an illusion as his wife would fain have had him, when she whispered about the air-drawn dagger.' This piece of criticism is cited on account of its mode of testing the question of objective reality. With sceptics, by the way, very curiously, a ghost is always expected to be thoroughly reasonable in every one of its comings and goings, though uniformly men are not so.

"What, however, for the present we would earnestly request of the sceptic is, to do with these apparently abnormal things as he would with any branch of natural science; that is, inquire as to facts. He would then find the instances are indeed numerous in which persons, just deceased, appear to those whom they have known and then *quickly disappear*. These passing manifestations also occasionally take place when the person appearing is not either dead or dying; neither does it follow necessarily that the person seeing, or, as the sceptic would say, fancying that he sees, must always be thinking of the one seen. An examination into the general facts leads to the conclusion that thought of the person appeared to, on the part of the one appearing, is the cause, according to certain laws of the internal world, of the manifestations, which should therefore, it is conceived, be understood as having an objective reality. This theory and its facts must be considered in judging of Shakespeare's intentions. Of him we should always think as of the artist and student of nature, until it can be shown that he ever forgets himself in those characters.

"While treating upon this subject, let it be observed, that it is the scepticism as to the objective reality of Banquo's Ghost which has originated the question as to whether he should be made visible to the spectators in the theatre, since, as the sceptics observe, he is invisible to all the assembled guests, and does not speak at all. But for this scepticism, it would never have been doubted that the Ghost should be made visible to the theatre, although he is invisible to Macbeth's company, and although no words are assigned to him. This doubt existing, illustrates to us how stage-management itself is affected by the philosophy which may prevail upon certain subjects. Upon the Spiritualist view, Banquo's Ghost, and the Witches themselves, are all in the same category, all belonging to the spiritual world, and seen by the spiritual eye; and the mere fact that the Ghost does not speak, is felt to have no bearing at all upon the question of his presentation as an objective reality."

— ROFFE,
"An Essay upon the Ghost Belief of Shakespeare."

"As regards wealth of thought, 'Macbeth' ranks far below 'Hamlet'; it lacks the wide, free, historic perfection which in 'Julius Caesar' raises us above the horror of his tragic fall. It cannot be compared with 'Othello' for completeness, depth of plot, or full, rich illustration of character. But, in our opinion, it excels all that Shakespeare, or any other poet, has created, in the simple force of the harmonious, majestic current of its action, in the transparency of its plan, in the nervous power and bold sweep of its language, and in its prodigal

wealth of poetical coloring. He who, to illustrate this last particular, should attempt to make a collection of the striking passages of this wonderful poem, would be tempted to transcribe page after page. He would hardly find himself under any necessity of making selections where all is so fine.

"With especial mastery the Poet employs the colors of nature and of place to heighten at critical points the interest of the action. It is here, if anywhere, that we may test the correctness of the idea that, for the true poet, nature is of interest only as an element in which man lives and moves. Shakespeare employs her various aspects in a two-fold manner, and with equally excellent effect in his tragic scenes. First, as an antithesis, or contrasting background for human action, and, secondly, symbolically, as a magic mirror, reflecting the appearance of the moral world in imaginative, ominous indefiniteness. Both kinds of representation abound in 'Macbeth.'" . . .

— F. Kreyssig, "Vorlesungen über Shakespeare."

"The element of poetic justice is not absent from Shakespeare's representation of life any more than it is from life itself. But in both it at times never appears at all; in both it acts imperfectly when it does appear. In 'Macbeth' the punishment falls upon the guilty husband and the guilty wife. But that, after all, is a matter of subsidiary consequence; as an end in view it scarcely plays any part in the development of the drama. It is the gradual transforming power of sin, when once it has taken full possession of the soul, which here arrests the attention.

It is the different character of the devastation wrought by it in different natures which furnishes a study as full of psychological interest as it is of dramatic.

"Macbeth, at the opening of the play, the valiant general, the loyal subject, promises even then, though unfixed in principle, to end his career as honourably as it has begun. His wife it is who at the outset is the dominant character. In her dauntless hardihood she gives courage and strength to her husband's infirm purpose, which, while longing for the fruits of crime, shrinks from its commission. But before the play approaches its conclusion, the positions of the two have been reversed. The gallant soldier of the early part has become a cruel tyrant, as inaccessible to remorse as he is to pity. The man, who at his first entrance into crime was horrified by the phantoms of his own disordered brain, comes to encounter recklessly and defy undauntedly the terrors of the visible and invisible worlds. The moral nature has become an absolute wreck. But with the hardening of the heart and the deadening of the conscience have disappeared entirely the compunctions which once unnerved the resolution and the tremors which shook the soul.

"Not so with Lady Macbeth. Her nature, far finer and higher strung, though at the beginning more resolute, pays at last in remorseful days and sleepless nights the full penalty of violated law. While Macbeth grows stronger as a man by the very course which destroys his susceptibility to moral considerations, this very susceptibility on her part increases with the success of the deed she has prompted."

— Lounsbury, "Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist."

FAMILIAR PASSAGES

1. When shall we three meet again
   In thunder, lightning, or in rain?
2. Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
   Hover through the fog and filthy air.
3. Shall he dwindle, peak and pine.
4. A drum, a drum!
   Macbeth doth come.
5. To the selfsame tune and words.
6. What, can the devil speak true?
7. And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
   The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
   Win us with honest trifles, to betray 's
   In deepest consequence.
8. Present fears
   Are less than horrible imaginings.
9. Come what come may,
   Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.
10. Nothing in his life
    Became him like the leaving it; he died
    As one that had been studied in his death
    To throw away the dearest thing he owed,
    As 't were a careless trifle.
11. There 's no art
    To find the mind's construction in the face.
12. The rest is labor, which is not used for you.
13. O, never
    Shall sun that morrow see!

14. Only look up clear;
To alter favor ever is to fear.
15. The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love.
16. If it were done when 't is done, then 't were well
It were done quickly.
17. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the other.
18. Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would,'
Like the poor cat i' the adage?
19. I dare do all that may become a man.
20. But screw your courage to the sticking-place.
21. False face must hide what the false heart doth know.
22. Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.
23. The attempt and not the deed
Confounds us.
24. Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more!'
25. The sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures.
26. The labor we delight in physics pain.
27. Had I but died an hour before this chance,
I had lived a blessed time.
28. Who could refrain
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make 's love known?
29. To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy.
30. There 's daggers in men's smiles.
31. Resolve yourselves apart.

32. Nought 's had, all 's spent,
Where our desire is got without content:
'T is safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

33. Things without all remedy
Should be without regard: what 's done is done.

34. Better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy.

35. After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.

36. Gentle, my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks.

37. A deed of dreadful note.

38. Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;
While night's black agents to their preys do rouse.

39. Whole as the marble, founded as the rock.

40. But now I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears.

41. The feast is sold
That is not often vouched, while 't is a-making,
'T is given with welcome: to feed were best at home;
From thence the sauce to meat is ceremony:
Meeting were bare without it.

42. Now, good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both!

43. This is the very painting of your fear.

44. Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once.

45. What is the night?
Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

46. Strange things I have in head, that will to hand;
Which must be acted ere they may be scanned.

47. You lack the season of all natures, sleep.

48. He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace and fear:
And you all know, security
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

49. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

50. By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.

51. Macbeth shall never vanquished be until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him.

52. What, will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?

53. The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it.

54. This deed I 'll do before this purpose cool.

55. When our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.

56. Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
To what they were before.

57. I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this earthly world; where to do harm
Is often laudable, to do good sometime
Accounted dangerous folly: why then, alas,
Do I put up that womanly defense,
To say I have done no harm?

58. Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell.

59. And my more-having would be as a sauce
To make me hunger more.

60. The king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude.

61. Such welcome and unwelcome things at once
'T is hard to reconcile.

62. I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me.

63. Our lack is nothing but our leave.

64. The night is long that never finds the day.

65. Out, damned spot! out, I say!

66. More needs she the divine than the physician.
God, God forgive us all!

67. Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love.

68. I have lived long enough: my way of life
Is fallen into the sear, the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old age.
As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honor, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.

69. Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

70. I have supped full with horrors;
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.

71. To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life 's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

72. I pull in resolution.

73. I gin to be aweary of the sun.

74. Blow, wind! come, wrack!
At least we'll die with harness on our back.

75. Why should I play the Roman fool, and die
On mine own sword?

76. That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope.

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT SHAKESPEARE

The facts that we know with absolute certainty about William Shakespeare can be given in a few meagre paragraphs. Some bare, prosaic records in Stratford and in the Stationers' Register in London, a few signatures, a will, a deed or two, an application for a coat-of-arms, an occasional mention of his name in court proceedings, in lists of actors, and in the works of fellow authors, — this is about all we have as the basis for a life of one of the greatest men that the world has produced. Traditions and quaint fanciful stories exist, as we might expect, in infinite number and variety. Many of these date back to the poet's own time, and therefore may have in them at least an element of truth. By far the greater number, however, gained popularity nearly a century after his death, when the curiosity of an age intensely interested in the drama began to look back and talk about the most marvellous of all the makers of plays. Few of these later traditions can be relied upon. Yet from the few scrappy facts that we have, supplemented by the earlier legends, and above all by a study of the plays themselves, it is possible to make a story of the poet's life, which, though by no means complete, is full enough to give us a fairly clear understanding of his growth in fame and business prosperity, and his development as a dramatist.

Few facts known about Shakespeare.

It is not strange that we know so little about Shakespeare. His age was not one of biographical writing. To-day a man of not one tenth part of his genius is besought by reporters for interviews concerning his life;

he is persuaded by admiring friends to write his memoirs; as his end approaches, every important newspaper in the land has an article of several columns ready to print the instant that word of his death comes over the wire. Three hundred and fifty years ago nothing of this kind was possible. Newspapers and magazines, genealogies and contemporary history did not exist. Encyclopædias, dictionaries of names, directories, "blue-books," and volumes of "Who's Who" had not been dreamed of. Personal correspondence was meagre, and what few letters were written seldom were preserved. Above all, a taste for reading the lives of men had not been formed. In fact, it was not until fifty years after Shakespeare's time that the art of biographical writing in England was really born. When we remember, in addition to these facts, that actors and playwrights then held a distinctly inferior position in society, and by the growing body of Puritans were looked upon with contempt and extreme disfavor, it is not surprising that no special heed was paid to the life of Shakespeare. On the contrary, it is astonishing that we know as much as we do about him, — fully as much as we know about most of the writers of his time, and even of many who lived much later.

Why we know so little about Shakespeare.

In the records of the 16th century there are numerous references to Shakespeares living in the midland counties of England, especially in Warwickshire. For the most part, they seem to have been substantial yeomen and plain farmers of sound practical sense rather than men of learning or culture. Some of them owned land and prospered. Such a one was John Shakespeare, who moved to Strat-

The poet's father, John Shakespeare.

ford-on-Avon about 1550 and became a dealer in malt and corn, meat, wool, and leather. He is referred to sometimes as a glover and a butcher. Probably he was both, and dealt besides in all the staples that farmers about the village produced and brought to market to sell. The fact that he could not write, which was nothing unusual among men of his station in the 16th century, did not prevent his prospering in business. For more than twenty years after the earliest mention of his name in the Stratford records, he is spoken of frequently and always in a way to show us that his financial standing in the community was steadily increasing. He seems also to have been a man of affairs. From one office to another he rose until in 1568 he held the position of High Bailiff, or Mayor of Stratford. Eleven years earlier his fortunes had been increased by his marriage to Mary Arden, the daughter of a prosperous farmer of the neighboring village of Wilmcote, who bequeathed to his daughter a house, with fifty acres of land, and a considerable sum of money. It is not fair, therefore, to speak of the father of William Shakespeare, as some have done, as "an uneducated peasant," or as "a provincial shopkeeper." At the time of the birth of his illustrious son he was one of the most prominent men in Stratford, decidedly well-to-do, respected and trusted by all.

The year before John Shakespeare brought his bride from Wilmcote to Stratford-on-Avon, he had purchased a house in Henley Street, and there he and his wife were living when their children were born. It was a cottage two stories high, with dormer windows, and of timber and plaster construction. Though frequently repaired and built over during the three hundred and fifty years that

The house in which Shakespeare was born.

have passed, it still remains in general appearance much the same as it looked in 1556. Simple, crude, plain, — it is nevertheless the most famous house in England, if not in the world. Noted men and women from all parts of the earth have visited Stratford to see it. Essays, stories, and poems have been written about it. Preserved in the care of the Memorial Society, it is the shrine of the literary pilgrim and the Mecca of tourists who flock during the summer to the quaint old village on the Avon. For here, in a small bare room on the second floor, William Shakespeare was born.

How little we know of Shakespeare, compared with even a minor poet of the 19th century, is shown by the fact that we are not certain of the exact date on which the greatest of all poets was born. The records of Holy Trinity Church in Stratford show that the child was baptized on April 26, 1564, and since it was the custom at that time for the baptism of children to take place on the third day after birth, it has been generally agreed that William was born on April 23, and that date is celebrated as his birthday. Tradition tells us, and probably truthfully, that it was also on this date, April 23, in 1616, that he died.

Date of the poet's birth, April 23, 1564.

Of the poet's boyhood we know next to nothing. It is a mistake, however, to assume that he lacked educational opportunities. There was in Stratford an excellent free Grammar School such as a bailiff's son would attend, and to which it is reasonable to suppose that the boy was sent. Here he studied chiefly Latin, for education then in England consisted almost entirely of the classics, especially Vergil, Ovid, Horace, and the comedies

Shakespeare's boyhood and schooling, 1571–1577.

SHAKESPEARE'S HOUSE AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON

THE ROOM WHERE SHAKESPEARE WAS BORN

of Plautus and Terence. The comment of Ben Jonson, his fellow dramatist of later years, that Shakespeare had "small Latin and less Greek," should not be taken too literally. Compared with the profound scholarship of a college-trained man like Jonson, the Stratford boy had, to be sure, but little knowledge of the classics. Yet there is every evidence to show that he understood both Latin and French pretty well, and that he knew the Bible thoroughly. It is clear, too, that by nature he was a boy of remarkable powers of observation and keenly retentive memory, who used every opportunity about him for acquiring information and ideas. Whether he went to school or not would have made but little difference to one whose mind possessed rare powers of developing and training itself. Like Burns and Lincoln, he was educated more by people and the world of Nature about him than by books and formal teaching.

Five years in Stratford after leaving school, 1577–1582.

Ordinarily a boy of the 16th century would remain at the Grammar School from seven to fourteen, but there is a well-founded tradition that Shakespeare left in 1577, when he was thirteen years old, and never attended school again. About this time the records show that his father's financial difficulties began. Another pair of hands was needed at home to help in the support of the family, and William was the oldest son. Just how he was occupied, however, between his fourteenth and eighteenth years we cannot say. Probably he assisted his father in his declining business. One of the bits of Stratford gossip, collected by the antiquarian Aubrey, states that he was "in his younger years a school-master in the country," and another tells us that "when he was a boy he exercised his father's

trade. When he killed a calf, he would doe it in a high style and make a speech." It may be, as another reference seems to imply, that he was employed in the office of a lawyer. But we must not put too much confidence in these traditions, which, like all stories passed on by word of mouth, grew and changed as the years went by. As much as we should like to know of his employment, his reading, and all the circumstances that were developing his mind and character during these five important years, we must remember that "there is no reason why anything should have been recorded; he was an obscure boy living in an inland village, before the age of newspapers, and out of relation with people of fashion and culture. During this period as little is known of him as is known of Cromwell during the same period; as little, but no less. This fact gives no occasion either for surprise or scepticism as to his marvellous genius; it was an entirely normal fact concerning boys growing up in unliterary times and in rural communities."[1]

His marriage to Anne Hathaway, 1582.

The first really authentic record we have of Shakespeare after his school days is that of the baptism of his daughter Susanna, on May 26, 1583. The previous year, when only eighteen, he had married Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a farmer in the neighboring village of Shottery. This picturesque hamlet was reached then from Stratford, as it is to-day, by a delightful foot-path through the wide and fertile fields of Warwickshire. Perhaps no other spot connected with the poet's life, except the house in which he was born, is dearer to people's hearts than the quaint old thatched-

[1] H. W. Mabie: "William Shakespeare, Poet, Dramatist, and Man," page 51.

Anne Hathaway's Cottage at Shottery

Interior of Anne Hathaway's Cottage

roof building known as "Anne Hathaway's cottage"; for it still stands, at least in part, as it was when the "youthful lover went courting through the meadows, past the 'bank where the wild thyme blows,' to Shottery." In February, 1585, two years after the birth of Susanna, twins were born, and soon after the youthful husband and father left his native town to seek his fortunes in London.

It would be most interesting to know when and how and just why Shakespeare left Stratford, but no documents have been found that throw any certain light upon this portion of his life. It has generally been assumed that he found his way to the metropolis soon after the birth of his twins. Probably he walked by the highway through Oxford and Wycombe, or if he rode it was on horseback, purchasing a saddle-horse at the beginning of his journey, as was the custom then, and selling it upon his arrival in the city. There is an old tradition that, with other young men of the village, he had been involved in a poaching escapade upon the estate of Sir Thomas Lucy. In the first regular biography of Shakespeare written by Nicholas Rowe in 1709, nearly a hundred years after the poet's death, the story of this adventure is given as an actual fact. "He had, by a misfortune common enough among young fellows, fallen into ill company, and among them some that made a frequent practice of deer-stealing, engaged him with them more than once in robbing a park that belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote, near Stratford. For this he was prosecuted by that gentleman, as he thought, somewhat too severely; and, in order to revenge that ill-usage, he made a ballad upon him, and though this, probably the first essay of his poetry, be lost,

Reasons for leaving Stratford: the poaching tradition.

yet it is said to have been so very bitter that it redoubled the prosecution against him to that degree that he was obliged to leave his business and family in Warwickshire and shelter himself in London." No trace of this ballad has been found; indeed, the whole story rests on gossip, and must not be taken too literally. It is supported, in a way, by the fact that Justice Shallow in "The Merry Wives of Windsor" is unquestionably a humorous sketch, or caricature, of Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote Hall, thus suggesting that whether he had been prosecuted and harried out of town by his wealthy neighbor or not, the youthful poet had some personal reasons for ridiculing the head of the Lucy family.

Still another account explains Shakespeare's departure from Stratford by stating that he joined a company of strolling players. Though this may possibly have been the means of his finding congenial travelling companions, it seems more natural to suppose that he left his native village much as a boy to-day leaves a remote country town and goes to the city to seek his fortune. His father's affairs, we know, had been steadily declining; his own family was growing; business in many trades through the midland counties was poor; any ambitious and high-spirited youth would have become restless and discontented. What was more natural, under these circumstances, than the breaking of home-ties and moving to London for its larger opportunities?

Stratford too narrow a field for Shakespeare.

The traditions that Shakespeare, upon his arrival in the capital about 1585, was employed in a printer's shop and a lawyer's office, are extremely doubtful. It seems much more likely that he became connected with the

theatre at once, either as a call-boy in the building itself, or as one of those who held the horses on which gallants of the city rode to the play-house. That he should have turned to the theatre rather than to business to get a foothold in London is not strange. Companies of players had frequently visited Stratford in his boyhood. Indeed, the people of his native town seem to have been exceptionally fond of the drama, a fact, as Mr. Mabie has pointed out, "of very obvious bearing on the education of Shakespeare's imagination and the bent of his mind toward a vocation." As a lad of eleven he probably saw the pageant at Kenilworth Castle, in honor of Queen Elizabeth's visit to the Earl of Leicester. The processions and gorgeous costumes of this occasion, the tableaux and scenes set forth by the actors from the city must have made a profound impression on the mind of the imaginative boy. Moreover, it was a time of widespread interest in everything dramatic. When Shakespeare was born in 1564, there was not a single building in London devoted to the presentation of plays. At the time of his death, fifty-two years later, there were at least nine. The development of the drama from simple morality plays and historical pageants given in tavern-yards and on village greens, to "Julius Caesar" and "Hamlet," covered the period of the poet's youth; so that when he arrived in London, more than ever before or since in English history, the theatre was of compelling interest and attraction.

Shakespeare's first connection with the London theatres.

The six years after his arrival in London are a blank. We must imagine him rapidly rising through various positions at the Rose or the Curtain, for a young man of his genius and enterprise would not long remain obscure.

It is certain that he became an actor before he wrote for the stage. By 1592, however, he had evidently earned sufficient fame as a playwright to stir the jealousy of Robert Greene, a rival author, who in that year refers bitterly to him as "in his owne conceit the only *Shakes-scene* in a countrie," and then parodies a line from an early play that is attributed to Shakespeare. While as an actor he was learning stagecraft in the best possible school, he was undoubtedly trying his prentice hand by mending old plays and contributing bits to the work of his older companions. These earliest dramatic writings may have been numerous, but they are either entirely lost or hidden in plays credited to other men. His progress from a clerk in a country store to a writer of drama is thus admirably described by Sidney Lee: "A young man of two-and-twenty, burdened with a wife and children, he had left his home in the little country town of Stratford-on-Avon in 1586 to seek his fortune in London. Without friends, without money, he had, like any other stage-struck youth, set his heart on becoming an actor in the metropolis. Fortune favoured him. He sought and won the humble office of call-boy in a London playhouse; but no sooner had his foot touched the lowest rung of the theatrical ladder than his genius taught him that the topmost rung was within his reach. He tried his hand on the revision of an old play, and the manager was not slow to recognize an unmatched gift for dramatic writing.[1]

His earliest work as actor and playwright.

It was not until 1593, when Shakespeare was twenty-nine, that he appeared openly in the field of authorship. On April 18 of that year his long poem "Venus and

[1] Sidney Lee: "Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Playgoer," page 32.

Adonis" was entered at Stationers' Hall for publication. It was printed by Richard Field, a Stratford man who had come to London somewhat earlier than the poet, and though published without a name on the title-page, the dedication to the Earl of Southampton was signed "William Shakespeare." The same is true of "Lucrece," which was registered in May of 1594. These two long poems must have had wide popularity, for they are often praised by critics of the day, and in the poet's own lifetime several editions of both were issued. They were the means by which Shakespeare became known as an author, for though some of his dramatic work may have been printed before this, plays were not regarded then as literature to be read, whereas these poems were issued under the poet's supervision for the reading public, and were thus "the first fruits of his conscious artistic life."

The first books published under his name.

Both as actor and playwright, Shakespeare's fame rapidly increased after 1594; in fact, the eight years that followed saw him rise to the height of his powers. His name stands first on the list of "principal Comedians" who acted Jonson's "Every Man in his Humour" in 1598. Francis Meres in his "Palladis Tamia," published in the same year, speaks of the "mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakespeare," and then proceeds to name twelve of his plays and compare him favorably with the Roman dramatists Seneca and Plautus. Even if this list is incomplete we see that already before 1598 he had written three of his most charming comedies, one of them "The Merchant of Venice," and at least one of the tragedies that ranks among his very greatest. From then until his retirement

Progress in fame and fortune.

to Stratford fourteen years later, there are frequent references to his plays which appeared with astonishing rapidity. The dates when they were written and first acted are often uncertain, but before 1612 he had produced more than twenty dramas which together constitute the most marvelous body of literary work that ever came from a human mind.

As an actor he did not continue to excel. If we may trust the sentiments of the sonnets, it is clear that he thoroughly disliked this part of his profession. Probably after 1604 he ceased to appear on the stage altogether. Financially it is certain that he was prosperous. We know, for one thing, that he owned shares in several London theatres, notably the Globe, where many of his own plays were first presented to enthusiastic London audiences. Then his successful application to the College of Heralds in 1599, on behalf of his father, for a grant of coat-of-arms; his purchase of several pieces of property in his native town; the records of lawsuits to recover debts which were owed him; numerous references which show us that he was looked upon as a man of means and standing; his friendship with Ben Jonson and other learned men of his day, — these facts, with the traditions of later generations, all convince us that the author of "Hamlet" and "Macbeth" was a successful man of affairs, as well as one of the most prominent and best-loved dramatists of his time.

Although Shakespeare made London his home after 1584 or 1585, it is probable that he often visited Stratford where his family continued to reside. An old legend states that he frequently put up at the Crown Inn in Oxford on his way to and fro. Documents exist, moreover, which

Holy Trinity Parish Church, Stratford-on-Avon

GOOD FREND FOR IESVS SAKE FORBEARE,
TO DIGG THE DVST ENCLOASED HEARE:
BLEST BE Y MAN Y SPARES THES STONES,
AND CVRST BE HE Y MOVES MY BONES.

Inscription on Shakespeare's Tomb

IVDICIO PYLIVM GENIO SOCRATEM ARTE MARONEM
TERRA TEGIT POPVLVS MÆRET OLYMPVS HABET

STAY PASSENGER WHY GOEST THOV BY SO FAST,
READ IF THOV CANST WHOM ENVIOVS DEATH HATH PLAST
WITH IN THIS MONVMENT SHAKSPEARE: WITH WHOME
QVICK NATVRE DIDE WHOSE NAME DOTH DECK Y TOMBE
FAR MORE THEN COST: SIEH ALL Y HE HATH WRITT
LEAVES LIVING ART BVT PAGE TO SERVE HIS WITT.

Inscription on Shakespeare's Monument, Trinity Church, Stratford-on-Avon

show that he was constantly investing money in real estate in his native village, to which he seems to have looked forward as a pleasant retreat after the strenuous days of actor, theatre-manager, and playwright were over. Probably the breaking off of London ties was gradual; but it is doubtful whether he was much in the city after 1612, the year in which "Henry VIII," the last of his plays, was written. He now appears in the records as "William Shakespeare, Gent., of Stratford-on-Avon"; and there he lived with his well-won honors, respected and loved, for four years.

Retirement from London, 1612.

In the early spring of 1616, Shakespeare's youngest daughter, Judith, was married. A month later he made his will, and on April 25 the register of Christ Church in Stratford shows that he was buried. According to the lettering on the monument he died on April 23, and that date, the date of his birth fifty-two years before, has been generally accepted as the day of his death. He was buried in the chancel of the fine old church, not far from the spot where he had been christened, and over the place where he lies may still be seen the quaint lines which tradition tells us he himself wrote to be inscribed above him:—

Death in Stratford, April 23, 1616.

> Good Frend for Iesus Sake Forbeare,
> To Digg the Dust Encloased Heare:
> Blest be Ye Man Yt Spares thes Stones,
> And Curst be he Yt Moves My Bones.

Whether the poet wrote these threatening words or not, no sexton has disturbed his remains, and the grave of William Shakespeare in the beautiful church by the river he loved has remained unopened.

Difficulties of determining the dates of the plays.

One of the problems of Shakespearean scholars for more than a century has been to determine the exact years in which the various plays were written. For just as we have no details of the poet's life, so are the records of his work either extremely meagre or entirely lacking. Not a single manuscript of anything that Shakespeare wrote has been preserved. The fire which burned the Globe theatre to the ground in 1613 may have destroyed the original pages of all the dramas: and yet, interesting and precious as they would be to us to-day, it is doubtful whether we can attribute to their loss our lack of knowledge as to just when each was written. We must remember that in Elizabethan times plays were not considered literature to be read. After they had served their purpose on the stage and passed out of popular favor, they were set aside and wholly neglected. As long as there was the slightest chance of their being in demand at the theatre, the author and companies of actors did their best to keep them out of print altogether, apparently in the belief that attendance at the playhouse would suffer if the drama in book form was in the hands of the people. Moreover, among the most cultivated men of the day, and especially among the growing body of Puritans, there was a strong prejudice against the whole theatrical business. By them, actors were held in low esteem, and plays were looked upon as things of light, or even questionable, character. The modern conception that regards the drama as a high and artistic form of literature had not been born.

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that during his own lifetime only sixteen of Shakespeare's thirty-seven plays appeared in print. These editions, which are known to-day as the Quartos, were small, cheaply-made, paper-bound pamphlets usually sold for a sixpence each. It is generally believed that they were issued without the poet's consent, and probably even against his wishes. Several of them were undoubtedly printed from shorthand notes taken slyly at a performance in the theatre. Others may have been set up from the soiled and tattered copies of a needy actor who had been secretly bribed to part with them. The confusion and strange blunders in the text show us that these Quartos were the careless and hasty work of piratical printers; indeed, it is almost certain that Shakespeare himself did not revise or in any way prepare a single one of them for the press.

The Quarto editions of the plays.

Inexact and inadequate as are the pirated Quarto editions, they would probably be the only plays of Shakespeare known to us to-day had it not been for a remarkable book that appeared seven years after his death. In 1623 two of the poet's friends put forth in a single volume his complete dramatic works. These men, John Heminge and Henry Condell, — names which are forever linked with Shakespeare's, — were actors in the same company with him, and, with Burbage, were joint owners of the Globe Theatre. The great dramatist, as a token of lifelong friendship, in his will bequeathed to them and to Burbage the sum of twenty-six shillings and eight pence to buy rings; and they in turn collected and edited his plays "to keepe the memory of so worthy a friend and fellow

The First Folio edition of the plays.

alive." It is a large volume of 901 pages in two columns of fine print, and on the title-page, besides a crude engraving of the poet, are these words:

Mr. William
SHAKESPEARES

COMEDIES,
HISTORIES, &
TRAGEDIES

Published according to the True Original Copies.

LONDON
Printed by Isaac Iaggard, and Ed. Blount. 1623.

This is perhaps the most important volume in the whole range of English literature, for in it appeared for the first time in print twenty of Shakespeare's plays, among them "The Tempest," "Twelfth Night," "Julius Caesar," "Macbeth," "Cymbeline," and others of the dramatist's masterpieces. Heminge and Condell had access to stage copies of these plays which in another generation might have been lost or destroyed by fire; so that their work, coming when it did, saved for us a large portion of the finest poetry and deepest wisdom of Shakespeare's mind. It is no wonder that the 156 extant copies of this notable book are preserved as priceless treasures; for no other single volume ever did a greater service to literature than this Folio of 1623.

Although Heminge and Condell must have known in many cases the exact years in which Shakespeare was at work upon his various plays, they did not consider such

information of sufficient interest to include it in their edition. Well might we spare some of the tiresome eulogies, which they printed in their preface, for a page or two of facts that they so easily might have included. As it stands, however, the First Folio helps but little in arranging the chronology of the comedies and tragedies. And yet, in spite of all difficulties, by painstaking research scholars have come to a pretty general agreement upon the dates of composition of most of the plays. The evidence which they have used may be divided into two kinds, external and internal, — that is, evidence found outside of the plays, and evidence found within the works themselves. External evidence consists of such information as has been obtained from records of performances in diaries and letters; quotations and allusions in other books; entries in the register of the Stationers' Company, which for nearly three hundred years regulated the publication of all books in England; records of the Master of Revels at Court, and of course the dates on the title-pages of the Quartos themselves. A good illustration of this sort of evidence is the journal of a certain Dr. Simon Forman, in which he mentions the fact that in 1610 and 1611 he witnessed performances of "Macbeth," "Cymbeline," and "The Winter's Tale" at the Globe. Another is the celebrated passage in the "Palladis Tamia," or "Wit's Treasury," of Francis Meres, which was published in 1598: "As *Plautus* and *Seneca* are accounted the best for Comedy and Tragedy among the Latines, so *Shakespeare* among y^e^ English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage; for Comedy, witness his *Gētlemē of Verona*, his *Errors*, his *Love labors lost*, his *Love*

Dates of composition: external evidence.

labours wonne, his *Midsummers night dreame*, & his *Merchant of Venice:* for Tragedy, his *Richard the 2*, *Richard the 3*, *Henry the 4*, *King John*, *Titus Andronicus*, and his *Romeo* and *Iuliet*." Such references as these give a definite year, later than which the plays referred to could not have been written. With a starting point thus settled, it is often possible to work backward and fix definitely the date of composition.

Dates of composition: internal evidence.

Internal evidence, though seldom as exact as external, and therefore more difficult to interpret, is much more abundant. It may be nothing more than a reference in the mouth of an actor to events or books the dates of which are known, such as the words in the Prologue to "Henry V" that refer to the expedition of the Earl of Essex to Ireland in 1599. More often it deals with considerations of the metre, language, and form of the work itself. By studying such matters as classical allusions, the use of Latin words, kinds of figures of speech, puns, variations of verse and prose, and many other changing peculiarities of the poet's method, scholars have been able to trace the development of Shakespeare as a writer, and thus assign many of his plays to their probable year on no other evidence than their style. For instance, the date of "Julius Caesar" is generally agreed to be not earlier than 1601 from the poet's use of the word "eternal" in the phrase "the eternal devil." As late as 1600 Shakespeare was using "infernal" in such expressions, but after that year he began to use "eternal," owing probably to the increasing objection among Puritans of London to the use of profanity on the stage. Even such a simple matter as the number of rhyming lines in a play may help to

place it approximately. In "Love's Labour's Lost," the earliest of the comedies, there are 1028 rhymes; whereas in "The Winter's Tale" and "The Tempest," written twenty years later, there are none and two respectively. It is therefore safe to assume that as Shakespeare's style developed he used rhyme less and less, so that tragedies with but few rhyming lines, such as "Antony and Cleopatra" and "Coriolanus," may be assigned, if on no other ground, to the later years of his life. Such matters of structure and style are by no means always certain. They are delicate to handle and require sound judgment and long experience. Yet it is by this sort of internal evidence, rather than by external facts, that the chronology of the plays has been determined.

Probable dates of the plays.

The following table gives the result of research and comparison, of proof and conjecture, on the part of Shakespearean scholars. There still remain, of course, many differences of opinion; some of the dates are less certain than others; a few are almost entirely the result of guesswork. Yet when we consider the meagre data upon which students have built their conclusions, their lack of agreement seems remarkably slight and insignificant.

Plays printed before 1623.

Of the thirty-seven plays in the following table, the sixteen which appeared in Quarto editions during the poet's life were "Titus Andronicus," 1594; "Richard II," "Richard III," and "Romeo and Juliet," 1597; "1 Henry IV" and "Love's Labour's Lost," 1598; "The Merchant of Venice," "Henry V," "Much Ado About Nothing," "2 Henry IV," and "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 1600; "The Merry Wives of Windsor," 1602; "Hamlet,"

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS AND POEMS

Period	Year	Poems	Comedies	Histories	Tragedies
I	1590		Love's Labour's Lost	1 Henry VI	
	1591		Comedy of Errors	2 Henry VI; 3 Henry VI	
	1592		Two Gentlemen of Verona	Richard III	Romeo and Juliet
	1593	Venus and Adonis		King John	Titus Andronicus
II	1594	Lucrece	A Midsummer Night's Dream		
	1595		Taming of the Shrew	Richard II	
	1596		Merchant of Venice		
	1597		Merry Wives of Windsor	1 Henry IV	
	1598		Much Ado About Nothing	2 Henry IV	
	1599	Passionate Pilgrim?	As You Like It	Henry V	
	1600		Twelfth Night		

III	1601	Phoenix and the Turtle?	Troilus and Cressida		Julius Caesar
	1602		All's Well that Ends Well		Hamlet
	1603		Measure for Measure		
	1604				Othello
	1605				King Lear
	1606				Macbeth
	1607				Timon of Athens
	1608	A Lover's Complaint?	Pericles		Antony and Cleopatra
	1609	Sonnets (Printed)			Coriolanus
IV	1610		Cymbeline		
	1611		Winter's Tale; Tempest		
	1612			Henry VIII	

1603; "King Lear," 1608; "Troilus and Cressida," and "Pericles," 1609. In addition to these, a Quarto of "Othello" was printed in 1622. The other twenty plays were not published, so far as we know, until 1623, when Heminge and Condell included them in the First Folio.

Periods of Shakespeare's development.

The periods shown in the table are, of course, wholly artificial. Shakespeare himself had no such division of his works in mind, and it is dangerous for us to-day to press very far the suggestion of clearly defined compartments for the plays. The development of the dramatist, like that of any artist, was gradual. Changes in style, in method, in views of life took place not in a single year, but were the result of slowly expanding power and growth of character. In that growth there were no sudden breaks or unaccountable transformations. The mind that created "Hamlet" in 1602 was the same mind that created "Twelfth Night" in 1600, no matter how black the line that separates them into two different periods. Yet a glance at the divisions in the table reveals two or three interesting facts.

The years of experiment, 1590–1593.

When Shakespeare has gained a foothold in the London theatres he first turns his hand to old plays, touching them up, remodelling, and improving. This is his natural work as an apprentice playwright. As he gains confidence and strikes out for himself, he experiments with all the forms of playwriting that then are known. Thus in "Love's Labour's Lost" we find one of the very few works the plot of which is his own invention; in "The Comedy of Errors" and "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" he imitates the Latin comedies of Plautus; in "Richard III" and "King John"

he attempts historical tragedy, and in "Romeo and Juliet" he gives us tragedy, full of romance and passion, drawn from Italy whence so many of his stories of later years are to come. The four years from 1590 to 1593 are evidently years of feeling about, testing himself, and experimenting. Naturally he writes with great rapidity: he is full of enthusiasm and the impetuous rush of youth. All that he does shows signs of a beginner and an unsettled purpose. We therefore do not expect to find highly finished work. As a matter of fact, with the exception of "Romeo and Juliet" and "Richard III," none of the plays of this early period are acted on the stage to-day or often read.

It is now that Shakespeare writes his two long story poems, — "Venus and Adonis" in 1593 and "Lucrece" in 1594. In them he retells classical legends taken chiefly from the Roman poet Ovid. Their elaborate and florid language reminds us of similar narrative poems of the period. In their spirit and style they resemble the early plays, but in one important respect they differ: they are published with their author's name on the title-page. Unlike the Quartos of the dramas, Shakespeare prepares these poems for the press. Their popularity surpasses even that of the comedies. Seven editions of "Venus and Adonis" are issued between 1593 and 1602, and five of "Lucrece" between 1594 and 1616. Among the reading public of his day he becomes more widely known by them than by his work for the stage. He is now, in the eyes of the learned world, an author and creator of real literature.

The poems.

By 1594 the years of apprenticeship are over; Shakespeare has found where his powers lie. He is still young

and ardent; the sadder and more serious things of life have not yet come to him; he sympathizes with the demands of the London populace to be amused. The results are the last of the histories and seven years of comedies, — the fullest, and we may well believe, the happiest time of his life as a dramatist. His power of expression, his skill in constructing a play, — above all, his keen insight into human nature, — develop with astonishing rapidity, until he is the favorite playwright of his day. In wit and enthusiasm, in pure poetry and "gusto," in creation of interesting and delightful character, the plays from "A Midsummer Night's Dream" to "Twelfth Night" stand unmatched. Not one of them has faded after three hundred years: they still are acted and read with profit and pleasure. Together they form "the rich period of unsurpassable comedy."

The great comedies, 1594-1600.

But youth and rollicking fun, high spirits and unbroken happiness, do not last. With the end of the century comes a turning-point in Shakespeare's life. Perhaps it is personal grief and suffering; possibly it is poor health and for the first time the thought that his own death may not be far away; possibly it is disappointment in his friends or his ambitions; or it may be simply a deeper wisdom coming with maturer years that now begins to make him think more and more of the greater and more serious things of life. The passions, the temptations, the moral struggles of mankind now absorb his interest. Naturally, comedy and history are inadequate for the expression of these deeper thoughts and emotions. With "Julius Caesar" begin the great tragedies, that "series of spectacles of the pity and terror

The great tragedies, 1601-1609.

of human suffering and human sin without parallel in the modern world."[1] Even the three comedies of these years are comedies only in name. Throughout them there is the atmosphere of suffering and sin. Their theme and spirit are more in keeping with "Hamlet" and "King Lear" than with the merrymaking and joyous fun of "As You Like It" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Thus every play of this period has a tragic motive, for during its nine years the mind and heart of the poet are concerned with the saddest and deepest things of human life.

The sonnets.

In 1609, toward the close of this period of tragedy, Shakespeare prints his volume of sonnets, one hundred and fifty-four in number. Some of them must have been written much earlier. Their style and youthful spirit show that; but besides, as early as 1598, Francis Meres spoke of Shakespeare's "sugred Sonnets among his private friends." Yet many of them show such power, such masterful handling of profound thought, such noble poetic form, that they seem to come from the years that produced "Hamlet" and "Othello." Probably the poet has been writing them off and on ever since he came to London, and now in 1609 he puts them at last into book form. It is well that he does so; for to-day every one who enjoys poetry reads them with delight. Unlike "Venus and Adonis" and "Lucrece" they do not fade; they are among the most perfect sonnets in our language, and they contain some of the finest lines that ever came from Shakespeare's pen. Here are two of the most admired:

[1] "The Facts about Shakespeare," Neilson and Thorndike. The Macmillan Company, 1915.

29.

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries
And look upon myself and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

116.

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixèd mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken;
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

The storm and stress of tragedy, however, does not continue to the end. In the last years Shakespeare turns

away from the bitterness and sorrow of life, and leaves us as his final message three romantic comedies of delightful charm. The calm and quiet humor of these plays is very different from the boisterous farce of "The Merry Wives of Windsor" and the buffoonery of the clowns in the earlier dramas; but their beauty and sweetness and idealism make a happy and fitting close to the poet's work. In "Henry VIII," which shows brilliant flashes of his genius, and in "The Two Noble Kinsmen," which is not generally included among his plays, he writes in collaboration with John Fletcher, or with some other of the younger dramatists of these later years. He has made his fortune; he knows that his work is done; he is looking fondly toward his Stratford home, and so he turns over his place to other men.

The later comedies, 1610–1612.

First, — imitating, feeling his way, experimenting, rapidly and eagerly trying everything about him; then seven full years of whole-souled joy of living, enthusiasm, laughter, and fun; then deeper emotions and profound thought upon the saddest and most serious things of life; then a happier time of calm reflection and repose, followed by retirement from active work in London to the peaceful village home on the Avon; then, after four quiet years, the end. Thus, in a way, we begin to understand the development of Shakespeare's mind and character by a study of the years in which he wrote his plays and poems.

Summary.

SHAKESPEARE'S POPULARITY IN HIS OWN DAY

There somehow exists a quite general feeling that Shakespeare's genius was not properly appreciated in his own time; that dramatists, now ranked far below him, were more popular with audiences in the days of Queen Elizabeth and King James I. Whether this notion comes from the scarcity of facts which we have concerning the poet's life, it is hard to say. Certainly such a belief must be ranked among the most unfortunate of popular errors. There is ample evidence to show that he was not only popular with uneducated London tradesmen and apprentices who thronged the pit of the Globe, but in the best critical judgment of the day he was considered the first of poets and dramatists. "Throughout his lifetime," says Sidney Lee, "and for a generation afterwards, his plays drew crowds to pit, boxes, and gallery alike. It is true that he was one of a number of popular dramatists, many of whom had rare gifts, and all of whom glowed with a spark of genuine literary fire. But Shakespeare was the sun in the firmament: when his light shone, the fires of all contemporaries paled in the playgoer's eye."[1]

Shakespeare widely appreciated in his own lifetime.

Many bits of evidence have come down to us that show how high a place in people's hearts the plays of Shakespeare held in their author's lifetime. For instance, when he had been in London but ten years he was summoned by Queen Elizabeth to play before her and the court at Greenwich in the

Evidences of his popularity.

[1] Sidney Lee: "Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Playgoer."

Christmas holidays. The favor which King James showed his tragedies is well known. "Hamlet" was acted several times in the first year of its production, both in London and at Oxford and Cambridge. Four editions were printed in eight years, — an unusual demand for those times. Moreover, the name of Shakespeare appears in the works of contemporary authors more than that of any other dramatist, and almost invariably it is coupled with praise and admiration. He is the "mellifluous" and "honey-tongued" poet. One sets him above Plautus and Seneca; another prefers him to Chaucer, Gower, and Spenser; another declares that "he puts them all down, ay, and Ben Jonson, too." In the preface of the first complete edition of his plays, published seven years after his death, the compilers, who were his fellow-actors and friends, wrote of him that he was one "who as he was a happie imitator of Nature, was a most gentle expresser of it. His mind and hand went together; and what he thought, he uttered with that easinesse that wee have scarse received from him a blot in his papers. But it is not our province, who onely gather his works and give them you, to praise him. It is yours that reade him. And there we hope, to your divers capacities, you will finde enough both to draw and hold you; for his wit can no more lie hid than it could be lost. Reade him, therefore; and againe and againe; and if then you doe not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger not to understand him."

Ben Jonson's praise of Shakespeare.

A part of the introductory material of this First Folio edition of the plays consists of poems of praise contributed by the poet's admirers. Among the most famous are the noble lines

of Ben Jonson, scholar, poet, and dramatist. Here are the words of a thoughtful critic who knew the theatre from the stage and from the audience, — a man who had been associated with Shakespeare throughout his London career and who understood, better than any other, his place in the hearts of English people.

TO THE MEMORY OF MY BELOVED MASTER WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE AND WHAT HE HATH LEFT US

To draw no envy, Shakespeare, on thy name,
Am I thus ample to thy book and fame;
While I confess thy writings to be such,
As neither Man nor Muse can praise too much.

* * * * * * * *

Soul of the age!
The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage!
My SHAKESPEARE, rise! I will not lodge thee by
Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie
A little further to make thee a room:
Thou art a monument without a tomb,
And art alive still while thy book doth live,
And we have wits to read, and praise to give.
That I not mix thee so my brain excuses, —
I mean with great, but disproportioned Muses;
For if I thought my judgment were of years,
I should commit thee surely with thy peers,
And tell how far thou didst our Lyly outshine,
Or sporting Kyd, or Marlowe's mighty line.
And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek
From thence to honour thee I would not seek

For names, but call forth thund'ring Æschylus,
Euripides and Sophocles to us,
Pacuvius, Accius, him of Cordova dead,
To life again to hear thy buskin tread,
And shake a stage; or when thy socks were on,
Leave thee alone for a comparison
Of all that insolent Greece or haughty Rome
Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.
Triumph, my Britain, thou hast one to show,
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not of an age, but for all time!
And all the Muses still were in their prime,
When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm
Our ears, or like a Mercury to charm!
Nature herself was proud of his designs,
And joyed to wear the dressing of his lines,
Which were so richly spun, and woven so fit,
As, since, she will vouchsafe no other wit.
The merry Greek, tart Aristophanes,
Neat Terence, witty Plautus, now not please;
But antiquated and deserted lie,
As they were not of Nature's family.
Yet must I not give Nature all; thy Art,
My gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a part.
For though the poet's matter nature be,
His art doth give the fashion; and that he
Who casts to write a living line, must sweat
(Such as thine are) and strike the second heat
Upon the Muses' anvil, turn the same,
And himself with it, that he thinks to frame;
Or for the laurel he may gain to scorn;
For a good poet's made, as well as born.

And such wert thou! Look how the father's face
Lives in his issue, even so the race
Of Shakespeare's mind and manners brightly shines
In his well turnèd and true filèd lines,
In each of which he seems to shake a lance,
As brandished at the eyes of ignorance.
Sweet Swan of Avon! what a sight it were
To see thee in our waters yet appear,
And make those flights upon the banks of Thames,
That so did take Eliza and our James!
But stay, I see thee in the hemisphere
Advanced, and made a constellation there!
Shine forth, thou Star of Poets, and with rage
Or influence chide or cheer the drooping stage,
Which, since thy flight from hence, hath mourned like night,
And despairs day but for thy volume's light.

Even without these lines and numerous other bits of unqualified praise from contemporary pens, the fact that the plays were financially successful, and that from them their author made for those times a small fortune, shows us that Shakespeare was truly appreciated by all sorts of people in his own day. Before his death he had taken the place which he now holds, — that of the foremost of English poets and dramatists.

SHAKESPEARE'S FAME SINCE HIS DEATH

During the three hundred years since Shakespeare's death the popularity of his plays on the stage has naturally varied somewhat with the changing taste of the times. Toward the end of his life a decline in the drama had begun, so that the generation which followed was more pleased by the coarse blood-and-thunder tragedies of Webster, Ford, and Massinger than by the more profound and more artistic work of Shakespeare. Certain ones of the plays that very early ceased to be popular on the stage have never since come into favor. Most of the histories, two or three of the earliest comedies, "All's Well That Ends Well," "Measure for Measure," "Pericles," "Timon of Athens," "Troilus and Cressida," and "Coriolanus" have seldom been acted since they were first produced. The subjects of some of these are not suitable to present in a modern theatre; in others, as in the histories, there is not enough action or dialogue to satisfy an audience to-day. Yet these make but a small portion of the poet's work. With the exception of the twenty years, 1640–1660, when all theatres in England were closed under the censorship of Cromwell's Puritan Government, there never has been an age that has not had the opportunity to see its foremost actors in the greater comedies and tragedies that came from Shakespeare's pen.

Shakespeare on the stage since 1616.

During the reign of Charles II, in the period known as the Restoration, and for the forty years that followed, literary taste was at its lowest mark. Naturally Shakespeare suffered at a time when the coarse and artificial

plays of Wycherley, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar fascinated both the nobility and the common people of London. His dramas, to be sure, were still presented on the stage, but they were generally worked over, or even rewritten, to suit the strange fancies of the age. With music, new scenes, and new characters they were mutilated almost beyond recognition. From one point of view they were spoiled; yet it is significant that even to the theatre-goers of 1680 they still had enough vitality and imaginative power to be made the foundation of popular and successful entertainments. Dryden, the chief poet of the time, admired the genius of their author, and wrote prefaces for them in their renovated form. Betterton, the greatest actor of the age, was regarded at his best as the Prince in "Hamlet," a part which he played on many occasions, and always to enthusiastic houses. Samuel Pepys, who kept a remarkable diary between 1661 and 1669, records in his journal three hundred and fifty-one visits to the London theatres during these eight years. On forty-one of these occasions he saw plays by Shakespeare, or plays based upon them. Though Pepys was entirely unable to appreciate the poetry and all the finer qualities of what he heard, — he speaks in especially slighting terms of the comedies, — still it is interesting to know that he had even the opportunity, in eight short years, to witness fourteen different works of the great Elizabethan dramatist. This, too, in England's darkest age of literary appreciation!

The feeling for Shakespeare during the Restoration, 1660–1740.

The middle of the eighteenth century saw a new and genuine enthusiasm for Shakespeare. Scholars began to study his life and his work. New editions were published,

with notes and comment. The plays were revived on the stage in their original and true form. A great interest in all that he had said and thought was born, — an interest which grew through the years that followed, and still is growing. The foremost actors of all times have turned to him for their most ambitious work, and the crowning of their professional achievement. Perhaps the greatest of them all was David Garrick. "From his first triumph in Richard III, in 1741, to his farewell performance of Lear in 1776, he won a series of signal successes in both tragedy and comedy, in Hamlet, Lear, Macbeth, Richard III, Falconbridge, Romeo, Hotspur, Iago, Leontes, Posthumus, Benedick, and Antony. Garrick's services to Shakespeare extended beyond the parts which he impersonated. He revived many plays, and though he garbled the texts freely, yet in comparison with earlier practice he really had some right to boast that he had restored the text of Shakespeare to the stage. Further, his example led to an increased popularity of Shakespeare in the theatre and afforded new incentives for other actors. Mrs. Clive, Mrs. Cibber, and Mrs. Pritchard were among the women who acted with Garrick. Macklin, by his revival of Shylock as a tragic character, Henderson, by his impersonation of Falstaff, and John Palmer in secondary characters, as Iago, Mercutio, Touchstone, and Sir Tobey, were his contemporaries most famous in their day."[1] After Garrick came Mrs. Kemble, Edmund Kean, Mrs. Siddons, Macready, and Booth, — names remembered to-day chiefly in connection with the Shakespearean rôles which they nobly played.

The great actors in Shakespeare's plays.

[1] Neilson and Thorndike: "The Facts about Shakespeare," page 174.

Shakespeare on the stage to-day.

Conditions have not changed in our own time. The greatest actors of our own generation, Sir Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, Helena Modjeska, Ada Rehan, Forbes Robertson, Beerbohm Tree, Julia Marlowe, and Edward Sothern, have been seen at their best in the comedies and tragedies of Shakespeare. Even in the twentieth century, with musical comedies, vaudeville, and moving-pictures to contend with, his plays are presented in greater number than are the plays of any other man who has ever lived. Nor are they revived merely for the sake of sentiment. They draw large audiences of all sorts of people. They still pay as purely business undertakings. "The Merchant of Venice," "Julius Caesar," "Hamlet," "Macbeth," "Twelfth Night," "As You Like It," "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Romeo and Juliet," "The Taming of the Shrew," and "The Merry Wives of Windsor" still earn money for actors and theatre-managers as they did three centuries ago. What is far more important, they still give pleasure and amusement, they still stir laughter and tears and awaken the imagination as they did at the Globe in London in the lifetime of their creator.

Shakespeare's plays read, as well as acted.

Shakespeare, we know, wrote his plays to be acted: to him they were distinctly stage productions to be seen and heard at the theatre. So little did he think of their being read that he apparently had no concern about them in their book form. To-day, on the contrary, though they still are presented on the stage, it is in school and college classrooms, in libraries, and in homes that they are chiefly known. New editions are constantly appearing. Plays and novels that were popular twenty years

ago are out of print and difficult to find; the works of Shakespeare, in a dozen different forms, are in every book-store of England and America. Quite apart from their acting qualities, they have come to be regarded as the highest type of literature in our language.

This is not the place to give an extensive criticism of Shakespeare's works, nor a full analysis of the reasons why the world regards them so highly apart from their value as stage performances. It will be enough to remind the student that in nothing that has ever been written do we find a clearer or more faithful portrayal of all the varying moods and emotions of human nature. The characters which Shakespeare has created live in our minds both as individuals and as types of the ideal. He strips away the petty things from life and shows us the eternal elements underneath. He has that wonderful and rare quality called universality; for he expresses the thoughts and feelings of us all, — the things which we know to be great and true. Somewhere in his plays everyone finds himself, and the discovery, though he may not realize it at the time, makes a lasting impression. For Shakespeare is the supreme teacher: he suggests, but does not preach, the art of living. Other men have done all this. But Shakespeare has left us his wisdom and his interpretation of life in a more beautiful and stately diction, in phrasing more apt and pleasing, in poetry of greater imaginative power, than has ever come from the mind of man.

Why Shakespeare lives.

More books have been written about Shakespeare than about any other person who ever lived.[1] This is not surpris-

[1] For titles of those books on Shakespeare most interesting to students and teachers, see page 224.

ing when we consider that the interest in his plays, which has existed now for three centuries, is world-wide, and when we remember that the language in which he wrote often needs explanation and comment to make it perfectly clear to the average reader to-day. Almost every English and American poet of note has left a tribute to the greatest of all poets. Perhaps the best known are Milton's famous Epitaph, "What needs my Shakespeare" etc., — and Ben Jonson's lines contributed to the First Folio in 1623, which are given on page 190. Here are a few other short poems, or selections from poems, which give honor and praise to those characteristics that have made Shakespeare the inspiration and the guiding-star of poets since Elizabethan times.

JAMES THOMSON

For lofty sense,
Creative fancy, and inspection keen
Through the deep windings of the human heart,
Is not wild Shakespeare thine and Nature's boast?

Summer — 17 7.

WILLIAM COLLINS

The temper of our isle, though cold, is clear;
And such our genius, noble though severe.
Our Shakespeare scorn'd the trifling rules of art,
But knew to conquer and surprise the heart!
In magic chains the captive thought to bind,
And fathom all the depths of human kind!

On our Late Taste in Music — 1747

THOMAS GRAY

FAR from the sun and summer gale
In thy green lap was Nature's Darling laid,
What time, where lucid Avon stray'd,
To him the mighty mother did unveil
Her awful face: the dauntless child
Stretch'd forth his little arms and smiled.
"This pencil take (she said), whose colours clear
Richly paint the vernal year:
Thine too these golden keys, immortal boy!
This can unlock the gates of joy;
Of horror that, and thrilling fears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears."

The Progress of Poesy — 1757.

HENRY ALFORD

WE stood upon the tomb of him whose praise,
Time, nor oblivious thrift, nor envy chill,
Nor war, nor ocean with her severing space,
Shall hinder from the peopled world to fill;
And thus, in fulness of our heart, we cried:
God's works are wonderful — the circling sky,
The rivers that with noiseless footing glide,
Man's firm-built strength, and woman's liquid eye;
But the high spirit that sleepeth here below,
More than all beautiful and stately things,
Glory to God the mighty Maker brings;
To whom alone 'twas given the bounds to know
Of human action, and the secret springs
Whence the deep streams of joy and sorrow flow.

Stratford-upon-Avon — 1837

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

THERE Shakespeare, on whose forehead climb
The crowns o' the world: O eyes sublime
With tears and laughter for all time!

A Vision of Poets — 1844

LEIGH HUNT

. . . HUMANITY'S divinest son,
That sprightliest, gravest, wisest, kindest one . . .

Thoughts of the Avon — 1844.

ROBERT BROWNING

— I DECLARE our Poet, him
Whose insight makes all others dim:
A thousand Poets pried at life,
And only one amid the strife
Rose to be Shakespeare.

Christmas Eve and Easter Day — 1850.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE

GREAT poet, 'twas thy art
To know thyself, and in thyself to be
Whate'er love, hate, ambition, destiny,
Or the firm, fatal purpose of the heart,
Can make of Man. Yet thou wert still the same,
Serene of thought, unhurt by thy own flame.

To Shakespeare — 1851.

WILLIAM WETMORE STORY

. . . SHAKESPEARE, whose strong soul could climb
Steeps of sheer terror, sound the ocean grand
Of Passion's deeps, or over Fancy's strand
Trip with his fairies, keeping step and time.
His, too, the power to laugh out full and clear,
With unembittered joyance, and to move
Along the silent, shadowy paths of love
As tenderly as Dante, whose austere,
Stern spirit through the worlds below, above,
Unsmiling strode, to tell their tidings here.

The Mighty Makers, II — 1851

MATTHEW ARNOLD

OTHERS abide our question. Thou art free.
We ask and ask — thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill,
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,
Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,
Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foil'd searching of mortality;

And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honour'd, self-secure
Didst tread on earth unguess'd at. — Better so!

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

Shakespeare — 1867

THE THEATRE OF SHAKESPEARE'S DAY

When Shakespeare left Stratford and went to London, theatres were in their infancy. The first one had been built in 1576, when he was a lad of twelve, and on his arrival in the city there were but three small wooden structures devoted to the production of plays. Enthusiasm for the drama, however, was aglow. With the sanction of Queen Elizabeth, herself a lover of pageants and revels, and under the patronage of the powerful Earls of Leicester, Southampton, and Rutland, the popular demand for this form of amusement grew with amazing rapidity. Theatres shot up one after another until in 1633 there were at least nineteen in London, "a number," says Brandes, "which no modern town of 300,000 inhabitants can equal." Poets, courtiers, scholars, — everyone who could write, — turned to the making of plays. The art which Shakespeare found in its crude and humble beginnings, in the short period of his active life, that is, between 1585 and 1610, developed through every stage to its highest form, so that never in the three hundred years that have since elapsed has the drama of the Elizabethan days been surpassed. In this development Shakespeare was "a pioneer — almost the creator or first designer — as well as the practised workman in unmatched perfection."[1]

Popularity of the first theatres.

Though the first theatre in England was not erected until Shakespeare was twelve years old, long before his time there had been many different kinds of simple plays. The instinct to act out a story had existed from the child-

[1] Sidney Lee: "Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Playgoer."

hood of the race. With the earliest telling of legends and folktales by minstrels and bards there had often been occasion for dramatic recital, dialogue, and action. For centuries, too, there had been the solemn mysteries and quaint old moralities. Mummers and bands of strolling players had wandered over Europe throughout the Middle Ages. The drama, therefore, which flowered in the last half of the sixteenth century, was not a new and sudden birth, but rather came as the natural outgrowth of centuries of crude and humble plays. In the beginning these had been closely connected with the service of the church; in fact, they had been a means of religious instruction rather than a form of amusement. To understand this more clearly, let us compare their origin with that of the Greek drama in earlier ages still.

Plays before theatres were built.

Many, many centuries before Shakespeare was born,—five or six hundred years B.C.,—the God Dionysus, or Bacchus, was worshipped in Greece at country festivals by boisterous groups of men who chanted and marched and exchanged bantering jests as they danced about the altar and acted out legends connected with the god. These actors, who represented the satyr followers of Dionysus, generally were clad in goatskins, whence we have our word "tragedy," from the Greek *tragos*, a goat, and *tragodia*, a goat-song. From these simple beginnings sprang the drama of Greece, which produced Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. The religious element persisted in ancient times much longer than in England, for the plays of the Greek dramatists who correspond to Shakespeare were still a form of worship. In the center of the orchestra

The religious origin of the Greek drama.

stood the altar of Dionysus, about which the chorus moved in solemn procession, chanting and reciting; before the performance began there were sacrifices to the god, and the plays were given in the spring on the days of the Dionysian festival. Greek tragedy was therefore not merely an entertainment, but a serious religious function. Beginning as a popular form of Nature worship, it finally became a means of expression for the most serious and finest of Greek thought and wisdom. As it spread from Athens to other towns, little by little it ceased to be a religious affair, until at last, as it gradually lost its vitality and splendor, its relation to the worship of Dionysus entirely disappeared. In similar fashion, comedy (from *comos*, a band of revellers, and *odé*, a song) developed from the ruder, more rustic elements in the worship of the same god, though here, as we might expect, the religious element did not persist as long as it did in its greater and more serious cousin, tragedy.

More than eighteen hundred years later, in England, we find the beginnings of the drama again closely related to worship. At a time when few of the common people could read, the priests in the churches found no method of teaching their congregations the stories of the Bible so effective as the use of objects and pictures which appealed to the eye. The effectiveness of their teaching was enormously increased when they added movement, action, and talk to their picture lessons. Indeed, it was but a step from the impressive and beautiful service of the Mass to a dramatic presentation, in simple form, of the most solemn scenes in religious history. "In this manner the people not only *heard* the story of the Adoration of the Magi and of the

English drama begins in the Church.

Marriage in Cana, but *saw* the story in tableau. In course of time the persons in these tableaux spoke and moved, and then it was but a logical step to the representation dramatically, by the priests before the altar, of the striking or significant events in the life of Christ."[1]

Thus in the services of the church at Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter were laid the foundations of our modern drama. These earliest performances, which were called Mysteries, dealt wholly with Bible stories, from the Creation to the Day of Judgment, and with the life of Christ; but as they became more and more popular with the masses, a broader field of subjects was sought, and lives of saints were used for dramatic material in the Miracle Plays of a century later. Not only were the priests the authors of both these simple forms of drama, but with the choir boys they were also the actors. For many years these plays were given on Holy Days and Saints' Days, either at the altar in the church itself, or in the enclosure just outside its walls. Their object continued to be largely religious instruction. In the Miracle plays, however, there were opportunities for a good deal of grotesque amusement. Incidents in the lives of the saints were not always serious or spiritual. The Devil gradually became more or less of a comic character. As the performances grew less solemn and awe-inspiring, the attitude of the people toward them changed. No longer did they attend them to worship, but rather to see a show and be amused. Gradually, therefore, they became separated from the service of the church, until finally they were banished once for all from the sacred walls, and but a few years after they had been

The Mysteries and Miracle Plays.

[1] W. H. Mabie: "William Shakespeare: Poet, Dramatist, and Man."

given at the altar they were being denounced by the priests as base and wicked things. Indeed, the feeling that plays are devices and temptations of Satan, which still exists, may be traced to the time, four centuries ago, when the drama lost favor with the Church.

Trade-Guilds and the plays.

The Mysteries and Miracle Plays did not decline in popularity when they were abandoned by the various religious orders. On the contrary, with the greater freedom and larger opportunity which separation from the church gave them, they increased rapidly in the people's favor. They were now taken up by the trade-guilds which, by the fifteenth century, developed elaborate and systematic methods of presenting them. Often different groups of tradesmen, such as the weavers' guild or the goldsmiths' guild, would unite, each band or " company " presenting an act or scene in the play to be undertaken. Huge, two-story covered wagons, somewhat like our large moving-vans to-day, took the place of stage and property-rooms. The actors dressed in the enclosed part of the vehicle, and then mounted a ladder or some rough stairs to the top story, or roof, where they performed their parts. Announced by heralds, — sometimes even by proclamation of the Mayor, — these pageants, as they were called, were drawn through the town on holidays and occasions of special festival. In the course of its progress the moving-stage would stop several times, — at the corners of the principal streets, in a public square, often at the doors of a church or cathedral. Then the crowd which had been following in its wake gathered about it to witness again the drama of Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden, of Noah, the flood and the ark, of Pilate and Herod, or one of the

numberless other stories with which they had been familiar from childhood.

Miracle Plays and Mysteries were followed by the Moralities in which abstract qualities such as Pleasure, Slander, Rage, Perseverance, and the Seven Deadly Sins took the place of characters from the Bible. This was a long stride forward. Now the field of subjects was greatly enlarged. Originality both in writing plays and in producing them was now first in demand. Opportunity had come at last for the creation of character, and for the use of everyday life on the stage. "Everyman," which has often been acted in our time, is a good example of what the Moralities at their best could be. Like the Miracle plays they were generally given by the guilds in marketplaces, enclosures of castles, and inn-yards where people could watch them from windows and balconies, as well as from the ground about the portable stage. Heavy, crude, and dull as these old plays now seem to us, they were intensely enjoyed by the populace of those far-away simpler times. From the eagerness and excitement with which they awaited their coming to town, or travelled long distances to see them, it is evident that a love of acting was inborn in the hearts of the people which sooner or later would develop a more finished and artistic drama.

The Moralities.

None of the performers in the Mysteries or Miracle Plays had been professional actors; but now with the Moralities came the opportunity for men to make a business of acting. As religious subjects gradually disappeared from the pageant stage, actors by profession came into existence. Wandering minstrels and story-tellers, mummers

Acting as a profession; companies of actors.

and strolling players, began to join together in troops for protection and companionship. "From the days of Henry VI onwards, members of the nobility began to entertain these companies of actors, and Henry VII and Henry VIII had their own private comedians. A 'Master of the Revels' was appointed to superintend musical and dramatic entertainments at court." A little later a statute of Parliament declared that "all actors who were not attached to the service of a nobleman should be treated as rogues and vagabonds, or in other words, might be whipped out of any town in which they appeared. This decree, of course, compelled all actors to enter the service of one great man or other, and we see that the aristocracy felt bound to protect their art. A large number of the first men in the kingdom, during Elizabeth's reign, had each his company of actors. The player received from the nobleman, whose 'servant' he was, a cloak bearing the arms of the family. On the other hand, he received no salary, but was simply paid for each performance given before his patron. We must thus conceive Shakespeare as bearing on his cloak the arms of Leicester, and afterwards of the Lord Chamberlain, until about his fortieth year. From 1604 onwards, when the company was promoted by James I to be His Majesty's Servants, it was the Royal arms that he wore."[1]

The first theatres in London.

For many years these companies of professional actors had no regular buildings in which to give their performances. Their plays were presented before their noble patrons in the great halls of their castles, and occasionally at court for the amusement of the king or queen. As late as Shake

[1] Georg Brandes: "William Shakespeare," page 99.

speare's boyhood they were witnessed by the common people in the yards of taverns, in the open streets, or on village greens. If the actors played in London, either in the guild-halls or out of doors, they first had to obtain a license from the Lord Mayor for each performance, and then they were obliged to surrender half of their receipts to the city treasury. These trying conditions, with the growing popularity of the drama among all classes, finally led in 1576 to the erection of the first building for acting purposes. This was called the Theatre. The following year the Curtain was erected; in 1587, the Rose; in 1594, the Swan; and in 1599, the Globe. Once begun they shot up with wonderful rapidity. When Shakespeare arrived in the city there were but three playhouses; in 1611, when he retired to Stratford, there were probably ten or twelve.

The location of the first theatres.

In one sense London even then did not possess a theatre, for the early playhouses were not in the city at all. They were built on a tract of open land across the Thames, at the further end of London Bridge, outside the walls and well beyond the jurisdiction of the Mayor. The capital was then a town of small dimensions, barely a mile square, with a population of nearly 200,000 crowded together in houses which were constructed largely of wood. The streets were narrow, crooked, and muddy. Adequate means of fighting fire and disease did not exist. The Corporation was therefore strongly opposed to the erection of dangerous and inflammable structures upon the few vacant spaces within the walls. Moreover, among the Puritans, who were coming to be a large and influential body, opposition to the drama was growing more marked

and open; so that the companies of actors were obliged to put up their theatres well beyond the reach of the city's laws.

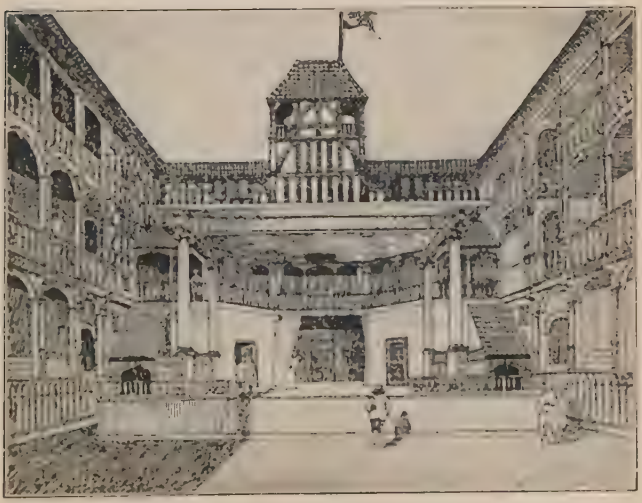
The Globe Theatre: its external appearance.

Let us now pay a visit to the Globe, to us the most interesting of all the theatres, for it is here that Shakespeare's company acts, and here many of his plays are first seen on the stage. We cross the Thames by London Bridge with its lines of crowded booths and shops and throngs of bustling tradesmen; or if it is fine weather we take a small boat and are rowed over the river to the southern shores. Here on the Bankside, in the part of London now called Southwark, beyond the end of the bridge, and in the open fields near the Bear Garden, stands a roundish, three-story wooden building, so high for its size that it looks more like a clumsy, squatty tower than a theatre. As we draw nearer we see that it is not exactly round after all, but is somewhat hexagonal in shape. The walls seem to slant a little inward, giving it the appearance of a huge thimble, or cocked hat, with six flattened sides instead of a circular surface. There are but few small windows and two low shabby entrances. The whole structure is so dingy and unattractive that we stand before it in wonder. Can this be the place where "Hamlet," "The Merchant of Venice," and "Julius Caesar" are put on the stage!

The Globe Theatre: the interior.

Our amazement on stepping inside is even greater. The first thing that astonishes us is the blue sky over our heads. The building has no roof except a narrow strip around the edge and a covering at the rear over the back part of the stage. The front of the stage and the whole center of the theatre is open to the air. Now we see how the in-

THE GLOBE THEATRE



INTERIOR OF AN ELIZABETHAN THEATRE

Godfrey's reconstruction of the Fortune Theatre

terior is lighted, though with the sunshine must often come rain and sleet and London fog. Looking up and out at the clouds floating by, we notice that a flag is flying from a short pole on the roof over the stage. This is most important, for it is announcing to the city across the river that this afternoon there is to be a play. It is bill-board, newspaper notice, and advertisement in one: and we may imagine the eagerness with which it is looked for among the theatre-loving populace of these later Elizabethan years. When the performance begins the flag will be lowered to proclaim to all that "the play is on."

Where, now, shall we sit? Before us on the ground level is a large open space, which corresponds to the orchestra circle on the floor of a modern playhouse. But here there is only the flat bare earth, trodden down hard, with rushes and straw scattered over it. There is not a sign of a seat! This is the "yard," or, as it is sometimes called, "the pit," where, by paying a penny or two, London apprentices, sailors, laborers, and the mixed crowd from the streets may stand jostling together. Some of the more enterprising ones may possibly sit on boxes and stools which they bring into the building with them. Among these "groundlings" there will surely be bustling confusion, noisy wrangling, and plenty of danger from pickpockets; so we look about us to find a more comfortable place from which to watch the performance.

Seating arrangements in the theatre: the pit.

On three sides of us, and extending well around the stage, are three tiers of narrow balconies. In some places these are divided into compartments, or boxes. The prices here are higher, varying from a few pennies to half a crown, according to

The balconies and boxes.

the location. By putting our money into a box held out to us, — there are no tickets, — we are allowed to climb the crooked wooden stairs to one of these compartments. Here we find rough benches and chairs, and above all a little seclusion from the throng of men and boys below. Along the edge of the stage we observe that there are stools, but these places, elevated and facing the audience, seem rather conspicuous, and besides the prices are high. They will be taken by the young gallants and men of fashion of London, in brave and brilliant clothes, with light swords at their belts, wide ruffled collars about their necks, and gay plumes in their hats. It will be amusing to see them show off their fine apparel, and display their wit at the expense of the groundlings in the pit, and even of the actors themselves. We are safer, however, and much more comfortable here in the balcony among the more sober, quiet gentlemen of London, who with mechanics, tradesmen, nobles, and shop-keepers have come to see the play.

The stage.

The moment we entered the theatre we were impressed by the size of the stage. Looking down upon it from the balcony, it seems even larger and very near us. If it is like the stage of the Fortune it is square, as shown in the illustration facing page 210. Here in the Globe it is probably narrower at the front than at the back, tapering from the rear wall almost to a point. Whatever its shape, it is only a roughly-built, high platform, open on three sides, and extending halfway into the "yard." Though a low railing runs about its edge, there are no footlights, — all performances are in the afternoon by the light of day which streams down through the open top, — and strangest of all there is no curtain. At each

side of the rear we can see a door that leads to the "tiring-rooms," where the actors dress, and from which they make their entrances. These are the "green-rooms" and wings of our theatre to-day. Between the doors is a curtain that now before the play begins is drawn together. Later when it is pulled aside, — not *upward* as curtains usually are now, — we shall see a shallow recess or alcove which serves as a secondary, or inner stage. Over this extends a narrow balcony covered by a roof which is supported at the front corners by two columns that stand well out from the wall. Still higher up, over the inner stage, is a sort of tower, sometimes called the "hut," and from a pole on this the flag is flying which summons the London populace from across the Thames. Rushes are strewn over the floor; there are no drops or wings or walls of painted scenery. In its simplicity and bareness it reminds us of the rude stage of the strolling players. Indeed, the whole interior of the building seems to be but an adaptation of the tavern-yard and village-green.

How, we wonder, can a play like "Julius Caesar" or "The Merchant of Venice" be staged on such a crude affair as this! What are the various parts of it for? Practically all acting is done, we shall see, on the front of the platform well out among the crowd in the pit, with the audience on three sides of the performers. All out-of-door scenes will be acted here, from a conversation in the streets of Venice or a dialogue in a garden, to a battle, a procession, or a banquet in the Forest of Arden. Here, too, with but the slightest alteration, or even with no change at all, interior scenes will be presented. With the "groundlings" crowded close up to its edges, and with young gallants

Use of the main stage.

sitting on its sides, this outer stage comes close to the people. On it will be all the main action of the drama: the various arrangements at the rear are for supplementary purposes and certain important effects.

Uses of the inner stage.

The inner stage, or alcove beyond the curtain, is used in many ways. It may serve for any room somewhat removed from the scene of action, such as a passage-way or a study. It often is made to represent a cave, a shop, or a prison. Here Othello, in a frenzy of jealous passion, strangles Desdemona as she lies in bed; here probably the ghost of Caesar appears to Brutus in his tent on the plains of Philippi; here stand the three fateful caskets in the mansion at Belmont, as we see by Portia's words,

> "Go, *draw aside the curtains*, and discover
> The several caskets to this noble Prince."

Tableaux and scenes within scenes, such as the short play in "Hamlet" by which the prince "catches the conscience of the king," are acted in this recess. But the most important use is to give the effect of a change of scene. By drawing apart and closing the curtain, with a few simple changes of properties in this inner compartment, a different background is possible. By such a slight variation of setting at the rear, the platform in the pit is transformed, by the quick imagination of the spectators, from a field or a street to a castle hall or a wood. Thus, the whole stage becomes the Forest of Arden by the use of a little greenery in the distance. Similarly, a few trees and shrubs at the rear of the inner stage, when the curtain is thrown aside, will change the setting from the court-room in the fourth act of "The Merchant of Venice," to the

scene in the garden at Belmont which immediately follows.

The balcony over the inner stage serves an important purpose, too. With the windows, which are often just over the doors leading to the tiring-rooms, it gives the effect of an upper story in a house, of walls in a castle, a tower, or any elevated position. This is the place, of course, where Juliet comes to greet Romeo who is in the garden below. In "Julius Caesar" when Cassius says,

Uses of the balcony over the stage.

"Go Pindarus, *get higher on that hill;*

* * * * * *

And tell me what thou notest about the field,"

the soldier undoubtedly climbs to the balcony, for a moment later, looking abroad over the field of battle, he reports to Cassius what he sees from his elevation. Here Jessica appears when Lorenzo calls under Shylock's windows, "Ho! who's within?" and on this balcony she is standing when she throws down to her lover a box of her father's jewels. "Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains," she says, and retires into the house, appearing below a moment later to run away with Lorenzo and his masquerading companions.

Besides these simple devices, if we look closely enough we shall see a trap-door, or perhaps two, in the platform. These are for the entrance of apparitions and demons. They correspond, in a way, to the balcony by giving the effect of a place lower than the stage level. Thus in the first scene of "The Tempest," which takes place in a storm at sea, the notion of a ship may be suggested to the audience by sailors

Other stage devices.

entering from the trap-door, as they might come up a hatchway to a deck. If it is a play with gods and goddesses and spirits, we may be startled to see them appear and disappear through the air. Evidently there is machinery of some sort in the hut over the balcony which can be used for lowering and raising deities and creatures that live above the earth. On each side of the stage is a flight of steps leading to the balcony. These are often covered, as plainly shown by Mr. Godfrey's reconstruction of the Fortune Theatre facing page 210. Here sit councils, senates, and princes with their courts. Macbeth uses them to give the impression of ascending to an upper chamber when he goes to kill the king, and down them he rushes to his wife after he has committed the fearful murder.

Scenery on the stage.

What astonishes us most, however, is the absence of scenery. To be sure, some slight attempt has been made to create scenic illusion. There are, perhaps, a few trees and boulders, a table, a chair or two, and pasteboard dishes of food. But there is little more. In the only drawing of the interior of an Elizabethan theatre that has been preserved, — a sketch of the Swan made in 1596, — the stage has absolutely no furniture except one plain bench on which one of the actors is sitting. Here before us in the Globe the walls may be covered with loose tapestries, black if the play is to be a tragedy, blue if a comedy; but it is quite possible that they are entirely bare. A placard on one of the pillars announces that the stage is now a street in Venice, now a courtroom, now the hall of a stately mansion. It may be that the Prologue, or even the actors themselves, will tell us at the opening of an act just where the scene is laid and what we are to imagine the platform to represent.

In "Henry V," for instance, the Prologue at the beginning not only explains the setting of the play, but asks forgiveness of the audience for attempting to put on the stage armies and battles and the "vasty fields of France."

"But pardon, gentles all,
The flat unraiséd spirit that hath dared
On this unworthy scaffold to bring forth
So great an object. Can this cockpit hold
The vasty fields of France? or may we cram
Within *this wooden O* the very casques
That did affright the air at Agincourt?
O, pardon! since a crooked figure may
Attest in little place a million;
And let us, ciphers to this great accompt,
On your imaginary forces work.
Suppose within the girdle of these walls
Are now confined two mighty monarchies,
Whose high-upreaŕéd and abutting fronts
The perilous, narrow ocean parts asunder.
Piece out our imperfections with your thoughts;
Into a thousand parts divide one man,
And make imaginary puissance.
Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them
Printing their proud hoofs i' the receiving earth,
For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings,
Carry them here and there, jumping o'er times,
Turning the accomplishment of many years
Into an hour-glass."

In "As You Like It" it is an actor who tells us at the opening of the second act that we are now to imagine the Forest of Arden before us. In the first sentence which

the banished Duke speaks, he says, "Are not *these woods* more free from peril than the envious court?" and a moment later, when Touchstone and the runaway maidens first enter the woods, Rosalind exclaims, "Well, this is the Forest of Arden!" A hint, a reference, a few simple contrivances, a placard or two, — these are enough. "Imaginary forces" are here in the audience keenly alive, and they will do the rest. By means of them, without the illusion of scenery, the bare wooden stage will become a ship, a garden, a palace, a London tavern. Whole armies will enter and retire by a single door. Battles will rage, royal processions pass in and out, graves will be dug, lovers will woo, — and all with hardly an important alteration of the setting. Lack of scenery does not limit the type of scenes that can be presented. On the contrary, it gives almost unlimited opportunities to the dramatist, for the spectators, in the force and freshness of their imagination, are children who willingly "play" that the stage is anything the author suggests. Their youthful enthusiasm, their simple tastes, above all their lack of knowledge of anything different, give them the enviable power of imagining the grandest, most beautiful, and most varied scenes on the same bare, unadorned boards. Apparently they are well satisfied with their stage; for it is not until nearly fifty years after Shakespeare's death that movable scenery is used in an English theatre.

The performance of a play.

It is now three o'clock and time for the performance to begin. Among the motley crowd of men and boys in the yard there is no longer room for another box or stool. They are evidently growing impatient and jostle together in noisy confusion. Suddenly three long blasts on a trumpet sound. The

mutterings in the pit subside, and all eyes turn toward the stage. First an actor, clothed in a black mantle and wearing a laurel wreath on his head, comes from behind the curtain and recites the prologue. From it we learn something of the story of the play to follow, and possibly a little about the scene of action. This is all very welcome, for we have no programs and the plot of the drama is unfamiliar. In a minute or two the Prologue retires and the actors of the first scene enter. We are soon impressed by the rapidity with which the play moves on. There is little stage "business"; though there may be some music between the acts, still there are no long waits; one scene follows another as quickly as the actors can make their exits and entrances. The whole play, therefore, does not last much over two hours. At the close there is an epilogue, spoken by one of the actors, after which the players kneel and join in a prayer for the queen. Then comes a final bit of amusement for the groundlings: the clown, or some other comic character of the company, sings a popular song, dances a brisk and boisterous jig, and the performance of the day is done.

During our novel experience this afternoon at the Globe, nothing has probably surprised us more than the elaborate and gorgeous costumes of the actors. At a time when so little attention is paid to scenery we naturally expect to find the dress of the players equally simple and plain. But we are mistaken. The costumes, to be sure, make little or no pretension to fit the period or place of action. Caesar appears in clothes such as are worn by a duke or an earl in 1601. "They are the ordinary dresses of various classes of the day, but they are often of rich material, and

Costumes of the actors.

in the height of current fashion. False hair and beards, crowns and sceptres, mitres and croziers, armour, helmets, shields, vizors, and weapons of war, hoods, bands, and cassocks, are relied on to indicate among the characters differences of rank or profession. The foreign observer, Thomas Platter of Basle, was impressed by the splendor of the actors' costumes. 'The players wear the most costly and beautiful dresses, for it is the custom in England, that when noblemen or knights die, they leave their finest clothes to their servants, who, since it would not be fitting for them to wear such splendid garments, sell them soon afterwards to the players for a small sum.'"[1] But no money is spared to secure the fitting garment for an important part. Indeed, it is quite probable that more is paid for a king's velvet robe or a prince's silken doublet than is given to the author for the play itself. Whether the elaborate costumes are appropriate or not, their general effect is pleasing, for they give variety and brilliant color to the bare and unattractive stage.

Female parts taken by boys.

If we are happily surprised by the costuming of the play, what shall we say of the actors who take the female parts! They are very evidently not women, or even girls, but boys whose voices have not changed, dressed, tricked out, and trained to appear as feminine as possible. It is considered unseemly for a woman to appear on a public stage, — indeed, the professional actress does not exist and will not be seen in an English theatre for nearly a century. Meanwhile plays are written with few female parts (remember "The Merchant of Venice," "Julius Caesar," and "Macbeth") and young boys are trained to take these

[1] Sidney Lee: "Shakespeare and the Modern Stage," page 41.

rôles. The theatregoers seem to enjoy the performance just as much as we do to-day with mature and accomplished actresses on the stage. Shakespeare and his fellow dramatists treated the situation with good grace or indifference. Thus in the epilogue of "As You Like It" Rosalind says to the audience, "*If I were a woman* I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me." The jest, of course, consists in the fact that she is *not* a woman at all, but a stripling. In a more tragic vein Cleopatra, before she dies, complains that "the quick comedians . . . will stage us, . . . and I shall see some *squeaking Cleopatra boy my* greatness." It may be that the boys who take the women's parts this afternoon wear masks to make them seem less masculine, though how that can improve the situation it is difficult to understand. There is an amusing reference to this practice in "A Midsummer Night's Dream." When Flute, the bellows-mender, is assigned a part in the drama which the mechanics of Athens are rehearsing, he exclaims, "Nay, faith, let me not play a woman; I have a beard coming"; to which protest Quince replies, "That's all one: you shall play it *in a mask*, and you may speak as small as you will."

The audience at the Globe.

Though rapid action, brilliant costumes, and, above all, the force and beauty of the lines, may lead us to forget that the heroine is only a boy, it is more difficult to keep our attention from being distracted by the audience around us. It surprises us that there are so few women present. We notice, too, that many of those who have come wear a mask of silk or velvet over their faces. Evidently it is hardly the proper thing for a respectable woman to be seen in a public theatre. The people in the balconies are

fairly orderly, but below in the pit the crowd is restless, noisy, and at times even boisterous. Bricklayers, dock-laborers, apprentices, serving-men, and idlers stand in jostling confusion. There are no police and no laws that are enforced. Pickpockets ply an active trade. One, we see, has been caught and is bound to the railing at the edge of the stage where he is an object of coarse jests and ridicule. Refreshment-sellers push about in the throng with apples and sausages, nuts and ale. There is much eating and drinking and plenty of smoking. On the stage the gallants are a constant source of bother to the players. They interrupt the Prologue, criticise the dress of the hero, banter the heroine, and joke with the clown. Even here in the gallery we can hear their comments — far from flattering — upon a scene that does not please them; when a little later they applaud, their praises are just as vigorous. Once it seems as though the play is going to be brought to a standstill by a wrangling quarrel between one of these rakish gentlemen and a group of groundlings near the stage. Their attention, however, is taken by the entrance of the leading actor declaiming a stirring passage, and their differences are soon forgotten. It is, on the whole, a good-natured rough crowd of the common people, the lower and middle classes from the great city across the river, — more like the crowd one sees to-day at a circus or a professional ball-game than at a theatre of the highest type. They loudly cheer the clown's final song and dance, and then with laughter, shouting, and jesting they pour out of the yard and in a moment the building is empty. The play is over until to-morrow afternoon.

What a contrast it all has been to a play in a theatre of

the twentieth century! When we think of the uncomfortable benches, the flat bare earth of the pit, the lack of scenery, footlights, and drop curtains; when we hear the shrill voices of boys piping the women's parts, and see mist and rain falling on spectator's heads, we are inclined to pity the playgoer of Elizabethan times. Yet he needs no pity. To him the theatre of his day was sufficient. The drama enacted there was a source of intense and genuine pleasure. His keen enthusiasm; his fresh, youthful eagerness; above all, his highly imaginative power, — far greater than ours to-day, — gave him an ability to understand and enjoy the poetry and dramatic force of Shakespeare's works, which we, with all the improvements of our palatial theatres, cannot equal. Crude, simple, coarse as they now seem to us, we can look back only with admiration upon the Swan and the Curtain and the Globe; for in them "The Merchant of Venice," "As You Like It," "Julius Caesar," "Hamlet," and "Macbeth" were received with acclamations of joy and wonder. In them the genius of Shakespeare was recognized and given a place in the drama of England which now, after three centuries have passed, it holds in the theatres and in the literature of all the world.

Conclusions to be drawn.

BOOKS OF INTEREST TO STUDENTS OF SHAKESPEARE

[A bibliography of works on Shakespeare would make a volume of considerable size. Here are a few of the most useful books for students and teachers.]

Our Fellow Shakespeare.
HORACE J. BRIDGES. McClurg & Co.

Shakespeare's Workmanship.
QUILLER-COUCH. Henry Holt & Co.

Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist.
RICHARD G. MOULTON. Clarendon Press.

An Introduction to Shakespeare.
MCCRACKAN, PIERCE, AND DURHAM. The Macmillan Co.

William Shakespeare: A Critical Study.
GEORGE BRANDES. The Macmillan Co.

A Life of William Shakespeare.
SIDNEY LEE. The Macmillan Co.

The Facts about Shakespeare.
NEILSON AND THORNDIKE. The Macmillan Co.

William Shakespeare: Poet, Dramatist, and Man.
H. W. MABIE. The Macmillan Co.

Shakespeare and the Modern Stage.
SIDNEY LEE. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Introduction to Shakespeare.
EDWARD DOWDEN. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Shakespeare.
WALTER RALEIGH. The Macmillan Co.

William Shakespeare.
JOHN MASEFIELD. Henry Holt & Co.

Shakespeare: The Boy.
W. J. ROLFE. Harper Bros.

Handbook to the Works of Shakespeare.
MORTON LUCE. George Bell and Sons.

Shakespeare: His Life, Art, and Characters.
REV. H. N. HUDSON. Ginn & Co.

Characteristics of Shakespeare's Women.
ANNA B. JAMESON. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines.
MARY COWDEN CLARKE. Page & Company.

Shakespeare's England.
WILLIAM WINTER. Moffat, Yard & Co.

Shakespeare's Manual.
F. G. FLEAY. The Macmillan Co.

An interesting story of Shakespeare's times is *Master Skylark*, by JOHN BENNETT, published by The Century Company. Another is *Will Shakespeare's Little Lad* by I. CLARK. Chas. Scribner & Son.

Scott's *Kenilworth* is a story of London and Warwickshire in 1575, and *The Fortunes of Nigel* gives a good picture of London in 1604, the year of "Othello."

NOTES

ACT I

Scene 1

The brevity of the first scene arrests then startles the eye the moment it rests upon the page. It is by no means a conventional beginning, introducing characters and initiating plot; it must not be looked upon as the forerunner of the second scene; but, rather, as an accompaniment of it, — and an accompaniment that had its beginnings before the play opens, and its real ending nowhere short of the final dénouement. That is, the world of the supernatural is intoning its own hollow music while all the other tunes of the play, — the martial strains, the songs of feasting, the tender tunes of intimate love and solicitude, — are singing themselves one after another. Realize that the conflict between the two armies has been raging all day; hear the din of arms; go, in thought, as the witches have been going all day, back and forth between their hidden place of meeting and the place where Macbeth has met foe after foe; remember that in those days men fought in the light of day only, — and this day is evidently toward its end; feel the evil solicitude of the witches hovering "through the fog and filthy air," and their ominous determination to meet the successful Macbeth as he comes back to his camp, bearing with him a victor's heart in which, their supernatural power told them, were all possibilities of good and evil. See how that evenly swaying balance between good and evil is suggested by "When the battle's lost — *and won*," and, "Fair is foul, and foul is fair." Sense the delight of the evil spirits in the thunder and lightning, — "fair" to them; see them now sharply outlined by a vivid flash and now hazy and gray in the darkness after; then when the roll of the thunder has died away, hear again that faint sound of arms, followed by the staccato

note, "Macbeth," spoken by a witch, — and by such a witch as can in her very next speech answer the call of her companion to some errand of mischief with a ready "Anon!" Get the full force of the vanishing of the three, with a threat and a triumphant boast that whatever is evil to men is good to them, what is good to men — as the great success of the soldier Macbeth — is to them great opportunity, invitation, to work havoc. Is there not here, crowded into the small space of ten lines, a marvelous background, an unbroken atmosphere of tragedy, an awakened interest in the hero, and an unbounded pity already bespoken for him when he meets these instruments of darkness "upon the heath" "ere the set of sun"? The keynote of the whole drama is struck, — and struck boldly. Now let confusion work her masterpiece! No other play of Shakespeare's opens so vividly, so compellingly, unless perhaps "Hamlet," — and is that, even, so poignantly dramatic? Can the second scene open quickly enough to satisfy the aroused interest? Is not the real test of the perfection of any first scene fully met?

The meter of the first scene is an interesting study. Whenever Shakespeare varied his iambic pentameter, he did so for some sufficient reason. He makes the supernatural beings talk a different measure from the human, just as, later on, he will make a drunken porter jibber and joke in jerky prose. The speeches were written to be spoken on the stage, and such variations have there their full effect. The meter of this scene is the iambic four-accent or tetrameter line. Apparent irregularities disappear when read aloud. "Where the place" "Upon the heath" makes one line, for example. In the eighth line there is an apparent irregularity; but we may give double stress to the word "meet," making it almost a word of two syllables, or we may say "Ma-acbeth" to give tone and volume to the one name of significance in the whole scene. Editors in the past — as far back as Johnson's day — have had their various ways of filling out the line:

"There to meet with *great* Macbeth,"
"There to meet and greet Macbeth,"
"There to meet with thane Macbeth,"

and even, "There to meet with thee, Macbeth," which, of course, in its assumed direct personal attack upon Macbeth spoils the fine impersonality of the witches. Steevens suggests that the third witch's speech was interrupted by a question, thus:

"There to meet with —

Another Witch: Whom?

Third Witch: Macbeth."

The ninth and tenth lines, again, make a complete whole, and "Anon" throws itself out of the scheme. "Hover" must be softened into one syllable — "ho'er," as we commonly say o'er and e'er. The rhyming couplet in lines eleven and twelve is the usual one at the end of a scene in the Elizabethan theatre where there was no curtain to fall and the flourish of an unexpected rhyme covered gracefully the exit of the characters.

8. Graymalkin: old cat.

9. Paddock: toad, or frog. These are the demons who control the witches, — their governing spirits who, for the purposes of communication, must take some tangible form, as cat or frog. We do not hear their voices, but the witches do — "Paddock calls," one says — and the reflection that Macbeth's fate is in the power of a supernatural being who, herself, is in the power of a mere toad or gray malkin intensifies the awfulness of the hero's situation, when his career is arrested by such diabolical interference.

DISCUSSION

Name five points that make this scene dramatic. Comment upon the character contrasts suggested between the three witches; and between the supernatural beings seen and those unseen. Name five points that make the scene a perfect opening for the play. Were you a producer, how would you make the scene effective as to drop, setting, lighting, costuming? Why would anything less than medieval barbaric ruggedness of setting spoil the atmosphere? How much time would the scene take in the actual performing? Would you retain it or discard it as making too many demands for the time it requires?

ACT I

Scene 2

One, J. Coleman, in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for March, 1889, writes: "Amongst the scenic effects of Kean's revival of *Macbeth* at the Princess's Theatre, I recall with pleasure Duncan's camp at Forres. The scene was discovered in night and silence, a couple of semi-savage armed kerns were on guard, prowling to and fro with stealthy steps. A distant trumpet-call was heard, another in reply, another, and yet another; a roll of the drum — an alarum. In an instant the whole camp was alive with kerns and gallowglasses, who circled round the old king and the princes of the blood. The Bleeding Sergeant was carried in upon a litter, and the scene was illuminated with the ruddy glare of burning pine-knots."

The king, Duncan, in absenting himself from the battle, in not feeling any too great anxiety about its outcome, in speaking his inquiries in somewhat stilted fashion, serves a fine dramatic purpose — that of bringing the hero to the front as much better material for a king. The dramatist must through this scene increase interest in his hero; and the first step is accomplished when we feel his strength and virility in comparison with his helpless, colorless cousin, Duncan. Malcolm, the king's son, is also unsatisfactory, — taken prisoner in the fight, set free by a sergeant, brought back of the battle line to a place of safety, — unworthy of the crown. Remembering that Macbeth and Duncan were first cousins, both grandsons of the old king Malcolm, having equal right to the throne, we find ourselves involuntarily hailing Macbeth, all through the scene, as the one who *should* be "king hereafter."

1. bloody man: one editor's splendid comment on this is: "The word 'bloody' appears on almost every page, and runs like a red thread through the whole piece; in no other of Shakespeare's dramas is it so frequent." — *Bodenstedt.*

9. Macdonwald: this rebellious spirit seemed to have had some of our feeling to-day against a king like Duncan. He called him, in the chronicle, a "fayntharted mylksop, more meete to govern a sort of idle monkes in some cloyster than to have ye rule of such valiant and hardy men as the Scottes were." Holinshed, however, called these "slanderous words."

12. western isles: Ireland, and the islands north.

13. kerns and gallowglasses: kerns were light-armed troops, carrying only daggers; gallowglasses wore coats of mail, helmets, long swords, and the famous gallowglass axes.

19. minion: darling. The word marked a sharp contrast to "Fortune-smiling" that shows that Macbeth puts his trust not in luck, but in valor.

21. Which: for *who*, as occasionally in the plays, referring to Macbeth.

21. ne'er shook hands: the rebel died without asking pardon, and Macbeth's rage and contempt could allow none of the courtesies often accorded a dying foe.

22. nave: navel. In ancient lore which Shakespeare knew, there are frequent accounts of such barbaric blows; as, in Nash's play, "Dido, Queen of Carthage": "Then from the navel to the throat at once he ript old Priam."

25. As whence the Sun: meaning, the same spring days give us both sunshine and storm. If we give *reflection* its Latin meaning of "turning back," it would mean the turning back of the sun at the spring equinox.

31. surveying vantage: seeing his opportunity.

32. furbished: freshly gleaming, untarnished.

35. Yes, As sparrows eagles: the irony of the sergeant is delightful.

39. bathe in reeking wounds: putting the emphasis on *bathe* will bring out the meaning of the line.

40. memorize another Golgotha: that is, make another as celebrated as the first. Read Matthew 27: 33.

41. I cannot tell: the broken line speaks eloquently of the almost exhausted breath of the speaker. Coleridge's comment upon the fainting of the sergeant at the climax of his recital is:

" the poet's object was to raise the mind at once to the high tragic tone, that the audience might be ready for the precipitate consummation of guilt in the early part of the play."

Enter Ross: a mere boy sergeant might, in his enthusiasm, paint too highly the bravery of Macbeth, but now a noble lord comes, with more dignity but no less enthusiasm, bearing the same story. Because Ross is a somewhat shadowy character, appearing, disappearing, some of the old editors delighted in trying to prove him an errant intruder — possibly the murderer of Banquo, that mysterious third murderer, or the agent of disaster to Macduff's home, or, finally, traitor to Macbeth. But may not Shakespeare use characters frankly as secondary only, — to bear great news, as here, without accounting for their designs or their whereabouts when they are off the stage? Actors of such minor parts, when they are " off," behind the scenes between their lines, doze or play away their time. Why call Ross a villain for no other reason than that we cannot always keep an eye on him? Were Ross such a man of ambitious design as these old critics would have him, he would certainly have been the hero of another play — or of this one! Shakespeare indulged most sparingly in mysteries, — and never in mystery for the sake of arousing speculation.

54. Bellona's bridegroom: the god Mars; a compliment to Macbeth who so far indeed seems wedded to war.

54. lapped in proof: wrapped in flawless armor.

55. self-comparisons: matched himself against Sweno? Or is it against the disloyal Cawdor? Both were loyal service for the king.

57. lavish spirit: unbounded passion.

59. composition: from its Latin derivative, *agreement*.

61. St. Colme's inch: the island of St. Columba, now called Inchcolm, in the Firth of Forth.

62. Ten thousand dollars: this seems startlingly modern. The word *dollar*, first *thaler*, was used frequently in Shakespeare's day, but of course it was an anachronism to put it into the mouth of Ross.

64. bosom interest: closest interest, or perhaps merely intimate affection. Again Duncan is, to his disadvantage, in con-

trast with Macbeth. Evidently his subjects easily fall away from his light control into being traitors; and he allows others to inform him of these, and punish them, while he himself wears his title as an easy gentlemanly task in comparison with "doubly redoubling strokes upon the foe."

64. present: instant.

65. And with his former title greet Macbeth: Macbeth had been Thane of Glamis. Henceforth he will bear also the title of Cawdor with which title the witches will greet him.

DISCUSSION

Feel the picturesque quality of this scene, by seeing the setting of the royal camp and hearing the alarums of the trumpet; then visualizing three contrasting characters — the quiet Duncan and Malcolm, the eager sergeant fainting from his wounds, the disturbed Ross, "haste looking through his eyes." Does not the young sergeant remind you of the valiant wounded boy in Browning's poem, "bound on bound full galloping," holding "himself erect by just his horse's mane" until he had given his message to his chief? What is this poem? How does the atmosphere of this scene compare with that of the first? How does the scene further one's interest in the plot? in the hero? In the construction of the play how much is the scene worth? If exposition is the whole purpose of a first act, is the scene an achievement? What does Shakespeare add to the mere exposition, however? Are there any dramatic speeches? Any that are quotable? Comment on the last two lines of the scene. Are we waiting too long for our first sight of the hero? On this point, compare this with other plays you have read. Compare the witches' acquaintance with Macbeth in the first scene with the soldiers' acquaintance with him in the second. Is it going too far to say that the former, although they say little, have a supernatural insight into the inner man, and the latter behold only the outer man? If so, how can Shakespeare make these two points of view come together, and continue as dramatic contrasts throughout the play?

ACT I

Scene 3

2. Killing swine: in those days witches were suspected of a special malice against swine. May there be some connection here with the story of Christ's casting the devils out of the tortured Gergesenes into the herd of swine?

5. munched: all these words of the witches must be accompanied by one's imagination of their bodily movements as they talked. The venom this witch evidently feels against the sailor's wife can be made terrific by seeing her mumble her toothless gums.

6. Aroint thee: get thee away! Possibly a formula for banishing spirits.

6. rump-fed: this is supposed to be an insult to the woman, implying that she fed upon the offal — fat, kidneys, and the like — of the kitchens of the rich.

7. to Aleppo . . . master o' the Tiger: in Hakluyt's "Voyages" there is an account, about the year 1590, of the voyage of a ship *Tiger* to Tripolis and thence by caravan to Aleppo. In "Twelfth Night" Shakespeare speaks of another ship by this name: V, i, 65.

8. in a sieve: witches could sail the sea in any kind of perilous bark — egg shells, mussel shells, sieves.

9. without a tail: when a witch assumed the shape of an animal, it was believed in those days that she was betrayed by not being able to acquire the tail.

10. I'll do: is the threatening to gnaw through the planks of the ship, or to destroy the rudder, after having bitten off the pilot's thumb and having made a tiny leak somewhere that would keep the ship knocking about the seas, rudderless, for "weary se'nnights nine times nine."

11. give thee a wind: these witches who held control of the winds and the weather are more than ready to give freely to one another any aid for the works of darkness.

17. shipman's card: the chart, sometimes called the "sea-card." We use the word in describing speaking *exactly* as speaking "by the card."

20. pent-house lid: the eyelid slopes like the roof of a pent-house or lean-to. Cf. "The Merchant of Venice": II, vi, 1.

21. forbid: shunned because under the control of demons.

22. se'nnights nine times nine: eighty-one weeks was, in those days of slow-sailing vessels, not so long a voyage.

23. dwindle, peak and pine: Holinshed gives an account of this awful curse brought by witches upon King Duffe. They were found melting before the fire a waxen image of the king, and as the image wasted away so did the king's flesh; they intended that the king should die as soon as the wax was consumed. When these witches were put to death, says the chronicle, the king began to mend.

24. cannot be lost: this reminds us of the awful protracted suffering of the Ancient Mariner, exclaiming: "And yet I could not die!"

30. A drum, a drum: spoken with restrained excitement, measured, ominous, the rhyme having its full dramatic effect. Several critics have pointed out that this is the real beginning of the play, and that all that preceded might have been omitted. It is true that Ross and Angus soon tell Macbeth all that happened in the second scene, and that all the speeches of the witches up to this point *could* be omitted; but who would willingly give up the awful solemnity of the first scene, or the touching picture of the boy sergeant, or the portrait of a vapid king *who almost deserved to be killed?* The drum here speaks of an escort for Macbeth and Banquo, but they alone appear to the eye.

32. weird: the first folio printed *weyward* in place of *weird*.

33. Posters: swift travelers.

35. Thrice to thine, etc.: the witch numbers of three, and multiples of three. Imagine the sisters here taking hands, circling in one direction three times, in the opposite three times, then back again three times, — giving the effect of having turned the world topsy-turvy, all order and consecutiveness annihilated. The dance seems to infest the circle with evil just as Macbeth steps into it, and at the same time to bind the three sisters together in a common enterprise that required their united efforts. All this is directed against the hero of the tragedy!

38. foul and fair: this line is one of those speeches that contain a multiplied suggestiveness in view of what follows in the scene. Of course Macbeth merely means *foul* in regard to the weather, *fair* in regard to his victory. Dowden points out the significance of the fact that these words of Macbeth's are really a repetition of the witches' in Scene 1; as if a connection were already established between his soul and theirs even before he ever sees them. I do not take it that he is already bewitched by their spells, but rather that his nature is one that *may be* easily influenced, for the opportunity of making his own moral choice must still be left to the hero — otherwise he cannot be the hero of a tragedy.

39. What are these: this is genuine surprise; so these weird sisters are not, even in appearance, the ordinary hags of witchcraft. Banquo is absorbed in the way they look, and who they are; but Macbeth's first imperative "Speak!" shows his uncontrolled and overbearing habit of command. Banquo's questions give us our information of how they look — on the earth but not of it; bearded but not men; chappy fingers, skinny lips, wild attire, — and all wrapt in silence until their appearance has sunk into the eyes of the two soldiers.

"But we know, and Shakespeare has helped to teach us, that the very soul of horror lies in the vague, the impalpable; that nothing in the world or out of it can so daunt and cow us as the dread of *we know not what*. Of darkness, again — of such darkness as this tragedy is cast in — that its menace lies in *suggestion* of the hooded eye watching us, the hand feeling to clutch us by the hair. No, Shakespeare knew what he was about, when he left his witches vague." — *Quiller-Couch.*

48. Speak, if you can: since the witches respond to this order at once we may almost imagine their chuckle of satisfaction at the readiness with which Macbeth enters their world.

49. All hail, Macbeth! These three salutations must be given slowly and with real dignity, for they are the seed which must be planted with greatest care. The first tells Macbeth what he already knows; the second, what is true although he does not yet know it; the third, what is not yet true but may become so if . . .

It is interesting to note that in Holinshed both Banquo and Macbeth are afraid to speak; but Shakespeare gives his hero that initiative that a hero must have.

51. why do you start: what a dramatic way to let us see the effect of the salutation upon Macbeth!

55. present grace, etc.: how skillfully our minds are kept upon the threefold character of the prophecy!

57. rapt: lost in thought.

60. Speak then to me: Banquo is still cool, and describes a perfectly balanced mind that neither begs nor fears. His is honest human wonder and curiosity — for there is in his heart no lurking darkness to give it any other tint.

65. Lesser than Macbeth, etc.: the evasive equivocation in these answers might engender evil ambition in a heart not perfectly clear; so here Shakespeare gets his best contrast between Macbeth and Banquo.

71. Sinel's death: Sinel was the father of Macbeth, lately dead.

73. A prosperous gentleman: there seems to be no reason here to suppose Macbeth trying to fool the witches as to his knowledge of Cawdor's treachery, and so to test their knowledge. Why may he not be asking a perfectly honest question? He may have left the battle as soon as he was victor to report to the king, and so have been ignorant of Cawdor's treachery and of the king's sentence upon that individual. Even Angus was ignorant of just what Cawdor had done previous to his confession. Cf. his speech later, II, 109–116.

78. charge you: here the tone of authority apparently decides the witches to stand no further human questioning.

Witches vanish: the Variorum quotes here an interesting comment, author unknown, on Irving's acting of this scene: "We make bold to say that Mr. Irving as Macbeth in the heath scene accomplished what high authority has pronounced impossible. His whole attitude as the bewildering prophecy strikes upon his ear, and as the strange prophets vanish into thin air, is that of a man who has actually held converse with the spirits of another world. He is not only dazed, but scared; and when

Ross and Angus bring him their message from the king, it is some time before he can collect himself sufficiently to listen to their congratulations."

84. insane root: the hemlock, says Greene in one of his plays, " makes men's eyes conceit unseen objects."

92. do contend: he knows not how to express his wonder and to give the praise due Macbeth.

104. earnest: promise of.

104. greater honor: what could be greater except the crown? Is the king thinking of abdicating in favor of his cousin?

109. Who was the thane: that Ross is helping Macbeth to plan successfully now that the Thane of Cawdor is dead; that Angus listens innocently enough because he has never known anything about Cawdor except what Ross has told him; that Macbeth silences Banquo by, a few lines later, alluring him with the promise of the witches, so that he will stand with them. This interpretation would give more point to this long conversation, but on the other hand why try to read more into the speeches than the intelligence catches naturally at first?

120. trusted home: trusted to the uttermost.

123. And oftentimes: there is here not only a whole philosophy of the conflict between good and evil, but also the whole moral of this particular tragedy. Banquo is a perfect foil to Macbeth in the way in which his nature repels the " instruments of darkness " even from the first.

127. Two truths are told, etc.: from now on to the end of the scene Macbeth's action is wonderfully dramatic. Absorbed in the significance of these events, crowded into so short a space of time, he goes in imagination so far ahead as the actual scene of killing his king. True it is a suggestion that unfixes his hair, that makes his heart pound against his ribs, that shakes his manhood to its depths — and " nothing is but what is not." There seems here a good reason for not making Ross an instigator of the plot, — for then this passage would lose a dramatic point, the wonder and dangerous interest with which he and Angus look upon Macbeth's abstraction, and the anxiety of Banquo to call Macbeth to his senses while he is being so closely

observed. He who acts the part of Macbeth here must do a difficult thing, — give the impression of a man present in body, far away in mind, trying now and again to pull both together to meet the situation which demands courtesy and recognition of the favor done him by the messengers of the king.

128. swelling act: cf. "Henry V," Prologue, line 4.

"And monarchs to behold the swelling scene!"

137. Present fears Are less: this is our first proof of that morbidly active imagination of Macbeth's which inspires so often later those vividly poetic speeches which amaze even Lady Macbeth. We must notice here, too, that there is no genuine moral hesitancy in plotting the death of Duncan, but only a fear of what his excited brain shows him. This vision is also a kind of forerunner of those hallucinations which later so easily come before his eyes.

140. my single state of man: my mere manhood. It is said that Garrick, in acting the part, spoke this phrase with long pauses between the words, in a low undertone, showing how Macbeth's mind shuddered at what he must do.

140. function Is smothered: power of action is crushed under the appalling image in his mind, is crippled, disabled. Hudson says, at this point, that here "all the elements of evil, hitherto latent within him, gather and fashion themselves into a wicked purpose."

147. Time and the hour: as in Latin, *tempus et hora*, meaning time and the critical hour will bring through the foreordained outcome of even the most perplexing affairs.

151. Are registered: in my memory.

154. The interim: he spoke of the interval of time here almost as a person — a cool impartial judge.

154. let us speak Our free hearts: is Macbeth here, oppressed by the consciousness of his "single state of man," almost wistful of Banquo's coöperation?

155. Very gladly: this does not imply that Banquo was willing to enter into a conspiracy against Duncan. On the contrary that he would refuse to harbor any dishonorable designs against the king can be seen from lines 20–29 of Act II, Scene 1.

DISCUSSION

How does the scene compare in dramatic effect with the first and second scenes? What is its unified dramatic purpose? Is there anything of interest in the variety of characters in the scene? Do Ross and Angus become more definite here? What variation of meter here, and for what purpose? Is there anything that holds the presence of the witches all through the scene to the very end? What are the memorable lines? What speeches add most to your understanding of Macbeth's character? What points are pulling him toward the evil deed; what considerations are holding him back? In what speech does he seem almost decided to let events take their course? Should he hold to this attitude and still ardently desire his king dead, the crown upon his own brow, would his guilt be anything the less? Does he speak anywhere here as a strong man facing overwhelming and sudden temptation? From how many sources does his temptation come? How far back does his temptation lie? What is his weakness as he reveals it in his soliloquies? What does the reader really want to see in the next scene?

ACT I

Scene 4

Remember, this scene is a day later than Scenes 1, 2, and 3.

6. set forth: sincerely set forth, is meant.

7. nothing in his life: there is real thrill in these lines describing a brave man's death. It is possible that Shakespeare may have had in mind the death of Essex, his gallant prayer for pardon from his queen, his quiet dignity as he sacrificed his life to the severity of her judgment. If this were so, how affecting to the Elizabethan audience must these lines have been!

9. studied in his death: trained — a phrase Shakespeare is doubtless borrowing from his own profession of acting.

11. careless: unworthy of care.

11. There's no art To find: is there not, for a keen man? Libby says: "this speech is Duncan's death warrant" — and it certainly does put him in the class of incompetents, almost whining over his betrayed confidence.

14. O worthiest cousin: is not this exaggerated praise of Macbeth also a sign of senility? Macbeth as he enters must show in his face at least elation and confidence in his fate; but is the king, like one who has learned a lesson, looking now for "the mind's construction"? If one has no admiration for Duncan in the second scene, one has here almost a contempt for him.

25. children and servants: that is, owe you allegiance and service.

28. plant thee: by conferring Cawdor's title upon him.

35. drops of sorrow: again, the tears of old age and weakness.

39. Prince of Cumberland: that is, heir to the throne.

41. shall shine On all: the childishness of the king seeks in this way to bind all to him — as if his experience with Cawdor were a shock he could not endure again.

44. The rest is labor: that is, "resting when there is the possibility of doing something for you is a real labor to me."

45. I'll be myself the harbinger: we understand his eagerness to see her.

50. Stars, hide your fires: Macbeth's imagination foresees night is the time for carrying through the murder.

52. wink at: not see what the hand does, or is it approve it, prompt it?

54. True, worthy Banquo: evidently they have been appraising apart the great service the king thinks Macbeth has done him.

55. I am fed: it is, as we say, meat and drink to me to hear others praise him.

58. kinsman: Duncan and Macbeth were sons of two daughters of the old king Malcolm. Lady Macbeth was Macbeth's third cousin. It is easy to see from this relationship of Macbeth and his wife to the king, why they might aspire to the throne, since they felt that they had as much right to it as Duncan, the present incumbent.

DISCUSSION

Has the scene sufficient value to be worth the space it occupies? Why would you not wish to lose the account of Cawdor's death? What lines in that account are memorable? What is significant about Macbeth's entrance just as Duncan speaks the words "an absolute trust"? Is Macbeth's first speech to the king merely conventional, or is it overdone? Is it natural that court disloyalty should try to hide itself in a cloak of hyperbole? Is pity aroused by Duncan's speeches, or only a contempt for him? What speech of Duncan's is a problem that Macbeth must solve? Has Shakespeare made this unusual moment for announcing the heir to the throne seem natural? Account for Macbeth's eagerness immediately after to reach his wife before Duncan arrives. Watch in the next scene to see how Macbeth's word, when he said he would make her hearing joyful with the king's approach, is borne out. Does this haste homeward mean fear? a shrinking that he wants encouraged? a desire to share responsibility? a wonder as to whether or not he will make circumstance the right occasion? a wish that she shall initiate the murder? or a tangled combination of all these feelings? How important in the play is the king's appointment of his son as his successor? Is it possible, as some editors think, that Duncan had already made some agreement with his cousin Macbeth that he should inherit upon Duncan's death? If so, do you not think that this would become later in Scene 7 one of Macbeth's arguments to himself for not killing the king? Does Macbeth see now two lives instead of one between him and the throne? In what passage is Macbeth's strained imagination again keyed to poetry? What about the morality of the lines, —

> "Yet let that be
> Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see."

Do you agree with Coleridge's comment: "I always think there is something especially Shakesperian in Duncan's speeches throughout this scene, such pourings forth, such abandonments, compared with the language of vulgar dramatists, whose char-

acters seem to have made their speeches as the actors learn them." Where is the most satisfactory dramatic conflict in this scene between Macbeth and Duncan? How do you explain the king's embracing Macbeth? Is there anything about Malcolm which fits him to be king — or is Macbeth still the strong man? Has this announcement of the heir upset Macbeth's philosophy as to " time and the hour "? Does the scene leave one impatient to know what follows?

ACT I

Scene 5

The scene changes here to Inverness, Macbeth's castle, and we have there the first glimpse of the character toward whom events and Macbeth's thoughts have been leading us, — Lady Macbeth. She has evidently read the beginning of the letter, and reads aloud to us only that point where the actual concerns of the drama begin. An anonymous article in Blackwood, June, 1843, speaks of Mrs. Siddons' entrance here as being hurried, as if she had, in company, merely glanced at the contents of the letter, and then escaped to privacy, to go over it again alone. She read along in a "strong, calm voice" until she came to the word " vanished." Still it was mere wonder that made her pause — for to her the real " winding up of the spell " was " Hail, king that shalt be," pronounced with the grandeur of one already by anticipation a queen. Another report of Mrs. Siddons' acting, by Knowles, is: " The Lady Macbeth of Mrs. Siddons was the Genius of guilty ambition personified; — expressed in form, in feature, motion, speech. An awe invested her. You felt as if there was a consciousness in the very atmosphere that surrounded her, which communicated its thrill to you. There was something absolutely subduing in her presence — an overpowering something that commanded silence, or if you spoke, prevented you from speaking above your breath. It was a thing once witnessed never to be forgotten, more to be remembered than the most gorgeous pageant that ever signalized the

triumph of human pride, or fulfilled the misgivings of human admiration." Neither of these views exactly tallies with our later interpretation of her character — but it is interesting how she has always been a deep study to any one who plays on the stage her part, and how varying and contradictory have been analyses of her rich complex nature. Ellen Terry, in a later article in *The London Times*, 1888, is described as making her reading of the letter " intent and full of terrible significance, the wife's mind absorbing itself in that of her beloved husband, and interpreting the suggestion of his written words. Miss Terry at once shows us that Lady Macbeth is a woman whose very love for her husband subordinates to it every other consideration, so that the achieving of this ambition must be her first thought. She knows his nature, and as she takes up his miniature tenderly and talks to it in loving tones she reviews his kindness of heart, and indicates that she must assume masculine strength to support him in the fatal purpose that he has revealed to her, and which she knows involves the ambition of his life. When Macbeth comes she rushes lovingly to his arms, and with the woman's instinct at once commences to read his thoughts, and attempts to turn them to action."

2. perfectest report: the coming true of one prophecy.

10. partner of greatness: a perfect piece of evidence of their partnership is their ambition.

14. Glamis thou art: a record of the Lady Macbeth of Adelaide Ristori is that, as she begins these lines, " she crooned forth the opening words until the voice changed almost to the hissing of a serpent: anon it rose to the swelling diapason of an organ, her eyes became luminous with infernal fire, the stately figure expanded, her white hands clutched her bosom, as if she would there and then have unsexed herself, and turned her ' woman's milk to gall,' and it really required but little stretch of imagination to conceive that the darkness and smoke of hell would burst forth and environ her then and there."

16. human kindness: see the discussion of this word on p. 121.

19. illness: evil nature is too strong for the meaning of **ill-ness**; it is rather the latent possibility of doing evil.

19. what thou wouldst highly: meaning the wish for something high that can be attained only by crime, and yet with the wish, the longing, to gratify it honestly.

22. That which cries: thou wouldst have the crown; and the crown cries: "If thou have me, *thus* thou must do — murder Duncan."

23. And that which: perhaps this is clearer in another reading — "An act which."

26. valor of my tongue: valor is a word of wonderful dignity — here, one of the expressions which forbid one interpreting Lady Macbeth's tongue as "shrewish."

27. golden round: the crown.

28. metaphysical: always in Shakespeare's time *supernatural*.

34. had the speed: kept ahead at a greater speed than Macbeth's.

37. raven himself is hoarse: even the hard voice of this bird, accustomed to foretell disaster, could not croak the entrance of Duncan in anything but doubly harsh tones. Or by "raven" may she mean the messenger? The servant says he is "almost dead for breath," and so she might follow with "naturally he would have no breath for such astonishing news — even the raven himself would croak it hoarsely." Mrs. Siddons is said to have stood immovable after the servant withdrew, for a long while silent, until her purpose settled itself to "the raven itself is hoarse."

40. mortal thoughts: thoughts of death.

40. unsex me here: she abjures her womanhood, suppresses all her natural instincts for the purposes ahead. The point to notice is that she possessed this womanly nature, — as she herself knows she was no "fiend," — but could only forswear her nature and consecrate herself, a changed self, to the passion that would carry her through all difficulties that she knew lay ahead. It is a prayer for consecration to purpose. Did Macbeth ever pray to have his nature changed? or need to, so far as entertaining the idea of crime is concerned?

43. remorse: relenting before the deed rather than repentance afterward.

45. keep peace between The effect and it: Hudson thinks that the word was space not peace; that is, she prays that no compunctions may keep space between her purpose and what it is to effect.

48. sightless: invisible.

49. thick night: the night that she invokes is not only dark, it is deepest dark with the smoke of hell.

51. keen knife: she, too, sees the details of the murder, adding to the setting of night, which Macbeth, too, saw, the details of the keen knife and its wound.

52. blanket of the dark: Hudson's note is: "The metaphor of darkness being a blanket wrapped round the world so as to keep the Divine Eye from seeing the deed, is just such a one as it was fitting for the boldest of poets to put into the mouth of the boldest of women."

56. ignorant present: ignorant of what is to follow.

57. instant: the present, fateful, critical moment.

58. Duncan comes here to-night: from here to the end of the scene Macbeth is tentative — not precisely wavering — but trying out her replies as if to see how his letter and the king's coming had worked in her mind. There is really no need for them to question each other: a look, a gesture, after so many conferences before the play opens, tells the whole story. Lady Macbeth sees his mind made up in his face — "a book where men may read strange matters" — and for fear he may betray himself she urges him to "look like the time," that is, as one should who is entertaining his king with ceremony. The first determination is clear enough in the slow words, "Oh, never shall sun that morrow see!"

61. Your face: as if for the first time she realizes how telltale it is.

67. into my dispatch: is this just what Macbeth has been wishing for? Plainly she takes generously the management of the plan upon herself — her unsexed self! Then as if his "We will speak further" might mean the ordinary wavering of humankind-ness she hurriedly begs him to leave all the rest to her.

71. To alter favor: to allow your countenance to change.

DISCUSSION

When did Macbeth write the letter that opens the scene? May a stage letter have any dramatic value? Or is it only a useful way of communicating information to an audience? Just how much revelation is in the soliloquy that follows the letter, — of Macbeth? of Lady Macbeth herself? What is Macbeth doing at the very moment his wife is analyzing his character? Is he not perhaps just then bearing out her fears in his determination to let "chance" crown him because, as she says, his eye is afraid to see what he must do? Why does she start so at the entrance of the messenger? at his news? How does she cover up her agitation with a simple explanation? After the messenger goes, by what steps does her excitement mount? What is her moment of greatest abandon? Why is it much more dramatic to see her acceptance of the "great news" when she is alone? Why are the words "To cry, hold! hold!" the really dramatic moment for Macbeth's entrance? What must pass between husband and wife in their first look into each other's eyes? If he is here dominated by desire to know her reaction upon the news, what is her great concern as she watches him? Her excitement is the greatest possible dramatic foil to his reticence. Does she divide the parts they must play that "great night" evenly — or does she undertake more than her share? Why? What might be her stage action when she greets him with all three titles? Does she echo anywhere the exact words of the witches whom she has not heard? Why do their experiences in the letter impress her so profoundly? Do you feel in any phrases the rapture she allows to the future? Take out Macbeth's three short speeches in lines 58, 60, and 69, and judge from them of the temper of his mind right here. As a whole how does the scene compare in dramatic power with all those that precede? Should the play be called, as has been suggested, "Lady Macbeth"? What qualities has she shown here that would entitle her to greatness in any age? What vivifying qualities has the entrance of her personality brought quickly into the play?

ACT I

Scene 6

There is little that is dramatic in this scene, — but much that is pleasant. The repose of the quiet conversation between Macbeth and Banquo, the repose of the seat of the castle as they describe it, gives us a breathing space after the intense passion of the preceding scene. Sir Joshua Reynolds writes in appreciation of it: "This short dialogue between Duncan and Banquo has always appeared to me a striking instance of what in painting is termed *repose*. Their conversation very naturally turns upon the beauty of (the castle's) situation, and the pleasantness of the air; and Banquo, observing the martlets' nests in every recess of the cornice, remarks, that where those birds most breed and haunt, the air is delicate. The subject of this quiet and easy conversation gives that repose so necessary to the mind after the tumultuous bustle of the preceding scenes, and perfectly contrasts the scene of horror that immediately succeeds. It seems as if Shakespeare asked himself, What is a prince likely to say to his attendants on such an occasion? Whereas the modern writers seem, on the contrary, to be always searching for new thoughts, such as would never occur to men in the situation which is represented. This also is frequently the practice of Homer, who, from the midst of battles and horrors, relieves and refreshes the mind of the reader by introducing some quiet rural image, or picture of familiar domestic life." Of course there is in the very quietness a dramatic interest — that of seeing the king, unconscious of his fate, walk to his death with praise and love of the beauty of its setting; and that of realizing how violent a deed is to outrage the peace of the castle.

4. temple-haunting: the martlet loves the quiet of temples — and finds it in this gentle castle of Macbeth's.

5. mansionry: masonry, building.

6. jutty: any abutting on any part of the house.

7. coign of vantage: convenient corner for building.

11. The love that follows us, etc.: these lines mean simply that the love which prompts our friends to visit us gives us

much trouble, yet we appreciate it as love. So you, Lady Macbeth, are to regard this occasion and thank us for the trouble we cause you.

14. All our service: how gracious a hostess she is, and how solicitous, — showing her natural charm in natural circumstances.

16. contend Against: to try to equal.

20. rest your hermits: that is, shall always pray for you, following up the king's suggestion that she should "bid God 'ild us for your pains."

20. thane of Cawdor: has the use of his recently acquired title any dramatic effect here?

22. purveyor: forerunner.

23. great love: was this all that helped him home first?

26. in compt: your servants hold all they have in readiness to use in your service, and are at any minute ready to give such account, or audit, of their possessions.

28. Give me your hand: so Lady Macbeth leads him into the castle — to what?

DISCUSSION

Coleridge's note upon this scene is: "The lyrical movement with which this scene opens, and the free and unengaged mind of Banquo, loving nature, and rewarded in the love itself, form a highly dramatic contrast with the labored rhythm and hypocritical over-much of Lady Macbeth's welcome, in which you cannot detect a ray of personal feeling, but all is thrown upon the 'dignities,' the general duty." How would you describe the atmosphere of the entire scene? What effect is gained by having Lady Macbeth alone welcome Duncan? How much interest do you feel in seeing her carry out the beginning of "this night's great business"? Is it a dramatic moment when she enters? Is it a dramatic picture when her youth and grace and beauty lead confiding old age to its undreamed-of doom? What makes her still charming in spite of the awfulness of this deception? What speech of hers almost echoes a former protestation

of gratitude from Macbeth? How many speeches has Lady Macbeth in the whole scene? What is the tenor of all? Does Duncan make any more appeal to you in this scene than before?

ACT I

Scene 7

This is one of the great scenes of the play. Macbeth is really suffering here from his conscience — commonplace as that conscience is. He cannot stay where he may see the preparations for the feastings; but has come away by himself to think and to argue with himself. It is commonplace arguing, too, — but arguing with his soul is not a thing he is accustomed to. He is genuinely agitated; speaks by fits and starts; and what he says is a complete and perfect revelation of his moral nature.

Sewer: server.

divers Servants: gives the impression that, as Lady Macbeth said, they really do hold all they have in readiness for their king. After the bustle of this preparation has passed there may be a long impressive pause before Macbeth enters.

1. If it were done, etc.: that is, if the deed, when done, were only followed by no consequences, but were *really* ended.

3. Could trammel up: could fetter, or net, the consequences, — prevent their naturally following.

3. catch With his surcease: could catch success, assured at the moment of the ceasing of the king's life, — or possibly the moment of the ceasing of the action of killing.

4. that but this blow: in the sense of, oh that this blow might be, etc.

6. shoal of time: possibly *school* of time — as is sustained by the "teach bloody instructions." If *shoal*, it must mean that human life in its shortness is like a narrow strip of land surrounded by the ocean.

6–7. But here . . . We 'ld jump: if only here we could jump. that is, escape, the life to come.

8. have judgment here: meet our retributions here in this present life.

8. that we: inasmuch as we, etc.

9. which, being taught: if he kills his king, then some subject of his, taught by his own example, may kill him when he becomes king.

11. Commends: offers.

14. Strong both: strong arguments both.

17. faculties: powers of kingship.

20. taking-off: murder.

21. pity, like a naked new-born babe: the comparison is difficult to explain word for word. The general meaning is that the tender pity a mother feels for a helpless child will become a messenger of vengeance to every part of the world.

23. sightless couriers of the air: the winds as they blow.

25–27. spur, prick, Vaulting, o'erleaps: all show the sustained metaphor of the rider jumping into his saddle with too great a leap which takes him over the other side of his saddle.

28. the other: the other side.

Enter Lady Macbeth: her speeches here are in an intense anxious whisper, as if she could not understand how he could run the risk of absenting himself from the feast.

35. Was the hope drunk: literally, were you then drunk when you first talked to me of becoming king?

39. Such I account thy love: then I shall think your love for me inspired only by wine. It is a severe taunt — but a telling one, cold, contemptuous, calculated to sting.

39. Art thou afeard To be: does she not know he is just that type of coward? Yet by such questioning do we not often reclaim a person?

42. the ornament of life: the crown.

43. a coward in thine own esteem: would this really affect Macbeth as it would affect her sensibilities?

45. Like the poor cat: the saying was, "The cat would eat fish but would not wet her feet."

45. Prithee, peace: all that she has said is more than he can understand.

47. Who dares do more, etc.: of course Macbeth's reasoning is perfectly good; but this is a crisis where Lady Macbeth's will must work even if with a quip. So she pursues, "What *beast* was it then," etc., taunting him again with the inconsistency of the position he is taking. The words should be spoken slowly, so that *beast* may hiss long upon Macbeth's ears.

48. break this enterprise: the clearest proof here of confidences upon this matter before the play opens.

51. Be so much more the man: is this safe argument?

52. adhere: were in accord with our designing.

54. I have given suck, etc.: that is, I am capable of cruelty now only because I have sworn a vow to do this thing. I am sacrificing my feelings, but I do it for the sake of consistency.

59. If we should fail: is there anything else but this weakest of weak objections he can make after the fire of her words?

59. We fail: scorn and impatience. *We fail;* we do but then stand for the consequences. *We fail!* how can you suggest such a thing? The inflection of the voice may give any of these three interpretations. But the voice should *not* fail to emphasize *we* — as if such partnership could possibly be unsuccessful.

60. screw your courage: as one screws up the chords of a stringed instrument to the point or pitch of proper tension, and finds the peg there fast in "the sticking place."

61. When Duncan is asleep: notice how rapidly she flies through the outline of the plan — all to give Macbeth courage.

64. wine and wassail: the drinking of a merry cup at the feast — such a feast as is going on this night.

64. convince: overpower.

65. memory, the warder of the brain: our memories do, from former experiences, warn the reason against similar dangers a second time. Wine converts the memory into a mere fume, or fog, that fills the brain, the receptacle of reason, which thus becomes like the condensing vessel, or "limbeck," alembic of a still, hazy with the fumes.

71. spongy: drunken.

72. quell: killing — from the Anglo-Saxon *cwellan*, "to kill."

72. Bring forth, etc.: how quickly she can supplement his weaknesses.

77. Who dares receive it other: spoken with the dignity and confidence of one who feels herself already a queen.

79. bend up Each corporal agent: bend all my physical, bodily powers — which he had in excess of hers surely — to carry through the terrible feat.

81. mock the time: Macbeth here echoes the admonition of Lady Macbeth in I, 5, line 62 and following. How long he is, though, in seeing the points she makes so resourcefully.

DISCUSSION

Quiller-Couch, writing of the "splendid audacity" Shakespeare shows in daring to make Macbeth a "murderer for private profit," — who can still engage always our pity for him — says: "Instead of using a paltry chance to condone Macbeth's guilt, he seized on it and plunged it threefold deeper, so that it might verily

'the multitudinous seas incarnadine.'

"Think of it: —

"He made this man, a sworn soldier, murder Duncan, his liege-lord.

"He made this man, a host, murder Duncan, a guest within his guests.

"He made this man, strong and hale, murder Duncan, old, weak, asleep and defenceless.

"He made this man commit murder for nothing but his own advancement.

"He made this man murder Duncan, who had steadily advanced him hitherto, who had never been aught but trustful, and who (that no detail of reproach might be wanting) had that very night, as he retired, sent, in most kindly thought, the gift of a diamond to his hostess.

"To sum up: instead of extenuating Macbeth's criminality, Shakespeare doubles and redoubles it. Deliberately this mag-

nificent artist locks every door on condonation, plunges the guilt deep as hell, and then — tucks up his sleeves."

Is Macbeth in the scene searching himself, his soul, or his chances of succeeding in the eyes of the world? Does he feel more compunction now that Duncan is about to feast and sleep in his castle? Make a list of his reasons against murdering the king, and note how conventional they all are. What is the one great reason that he seems unconscious of? When Lady Macbeth finds him lost in this maze of reasoning, how many keys does she play upon to try to recall him to a fixed purpose? — there are impatience, contempt, scorn, tenderness, bitterness, exaggeration of what she really knows is true, even resentment What speech shows each of these? What do you think is the most telling of all her attacks? Just how in this scene is she the perfect complement of her lord? Just what terrible moments must there have been for her in this long discussion, uncertain in its outcome? Why is this scene the real end of Act I? The period of temptation now lived through — or rather, fought through — the next unit of construction must, of course, be the enactment of the crime. Which do you think will be the more engrossing to watch? Can there be as much intense human interest in watching the actual perpetration of a crime as in watching its inception in a human mind, or its consequences afterward? With the end of Act I we are at home with two great dramatic characters, and with them are plunged in a situation from which there is now no escape.

ACT II

Scene 1

Court of Macbeth's castle: probably some inner court which Banquo would cross between the hall of feasting and his chamber. Fleance attends him as his young squire, bearing the light, helping his father off with his armor. The darkness is lighted only by fitful flashes from the torch; and over us, as we watch, comes the consciousness that we are to move largely in

scenes removed from the real scene of action. The murders themselves we do not see; we see the mental agitation of those who go to kill, their abject terror the moment the deed is done — and the restless fever of those — like Banquo here — who are uneasily conscious that something terrible is about them. So we go through this tragedy of souls — not at all through a series of sensational crimes.

4. husbandry: thrift so far as the light of the stars goes; cloudy.

5. Take thee that too: giving Fleance another piece of armor.

8. cursed thoughts: do you think this means his own wonderment about the prophecy to himself — or has he actual fears for Macbeth?

10. Who 's there? An unknown person, in the dark, was always halted and challenged as an enemy. Hence the answer, "A friend."

14. largess to your offices: gifts to be distributed among Macbeth's servants.

16. shut up: is absorbed and at rest, as he turns to sleep, in his content over Macbeth's loyal entertainment.

18. became the servant: being unprepared we could not celebrate his coming as we would wish to do.

20. I dreamt: does this mean that Banquo's dreams are haunted by the prophecies? Are these the "cursed thoughts" he refers to in the beginning of the scene?

21. I think not of them: in what sense may this be true?

25. cleave to my consent: this must mean, if you will, when we come to talk together, stand by my side in all my plans, I will, as king, reward you with great honors.

26. lose none: no honor.

28. bosom franchised: free from guilt.

29. shall be counselled: shall be willing to talk things over with you.

Exeunt Banquo and Fleance: first Fleance bears away his torch, then Macbeth dismisses his torch bearer — imagine the darkness and the tense atmosphere of that darkness. Lady Macbeth is preparing for him the drink that shall give him courage for the deed ahead.

33. Is this a dagger, etc.: can we describe the tone in which Macbeth says this? It combines surprise, awe, dread, encouragement, confidence, a chance again to believe his fate is directed by something outside himself and to shift, in this sense, some of the responsibility.

34. let me clutch thee: what is the action here?

35. I see thee yet: why does the dagger grow alternately fainter and stronger as he talks?

41. As this which now I draw: what is his action, and what comparison does he make?

42. that I was going: put the emphasis upon *was*, meaning, that I was going anyway, with or without your invitation.

44. are made the fools: if the dagger is unreal his eyes are fooled; if it is real, then his eyes are worth more than his sense of touch, for he cannot touch the dagger.

46. dudgeon: wooden handle.

46. gouts of blood: drops; from the Latin *gutta*.

47. Which was not so before: why should the vision change as he proceeds?

49. Now o'er the one half-world: this hemisphere.

51. curtained sleep: while not an unusual epithet to apply to sleep then, does it not here bring vividly before us the picture of the sleeping king, the curtains of his bed drawn protectingly around him?

51. witchcraft celebrates, etc.: the rites paid by all demons of the night to Hecate, the pale queen of the lower world. A night of sorcery, murder, and rape is described in these lines, — as Johnson calls it, "the night of the murderer."

54. Whose howl 's his watch: who marks this watch through the night by his howls.

55. Tarquin's ravishing strides: can we not feel the suspense in those hushed long slow steps with which one moves among sleepers?

56. sure and firm-set earth: is it a comfort to him to feel it solid beneath his feet; and then does he realize that this very solidity makes it reëcho every one of his footsteps?

59. the present horror: it does suit the time of midnight.

61. Words to the heat, etc.: is it natural that he should be epigrammatic at this crisis?

A bell rings: that is, of course, the bell that Lady Macbeth was to strike to show that all is ready for him to go to Duncan's chamber. How symbolic of the whole situation it is that she, having prepared the details with her sure instinct, calls her lord to do the last thing that she could not! Kemble, in his production, substituted here the striking of the clock twice — to agree with the words of Lady Macbeth in the sleepwalking scene, "One, two, why then 't is time to do it!" But how much more significance there is at this point in her summoning Macbeth.

63. Hear it not: to be spoken with genuine sadness — but no lack of determination.

DISCUSSION

The opening lines of a scene always strike the keynote: what is it here? Both in nature and in the heart of Banquo? What does Fleance add to the scene? Are natural conversations in a low, even key like this between father and son necessarily undramatic?

To what degree may Banquo's mind be disturbed without detracting from the contrast between him and Macbeth? Why should Banquo immediately begin to speak to Macbeth about the king? Banquo is praying against thoughts of temptation in his sleep; Macbeth is moving "steadily toward his design"; is he too noble really to believe his suspicion of Macbeth? otherwise, would he not have tried to stop Macbeth, or warn Duncan? Where does his clear frankness receive in return an intentional obscurity from Macbeth? Does this add anything to the scene? What is the real cause for the apparition of the dagger? Would you represent the dagger to the audience? Is there, in the fact that it appears and disappears, any evidence of the cause of its appearing at all? Is the apparition necessary to spur Macbeth on to the deed, — or is it simply to keep in our minds the supernatural as an abiding element in this

tragedy? Why should the apparition change in appearance? Story says: "In this (soliloquy) we have Macbeth's three characteristic features brought out one after the other: the cloudy vision of the air-drawn dagger; then the strong fire of his poetry about Hecate and withered murder's sentinel, the wolf, and Tarquin's ravishing strides; and as these clear off, the stern, sullen resolution underneath — 'Whiles I threat, he lives.' 'I go, and it is done!'" How do you account for his "Straw fire" description of the night? Is it of real value here? What is the sharp note of reality that recalls him to himself? Where should the actor of the part make his aspect most lost and bewildered? Where should he quiet most his disordered imagination? Has Macbeth a dramatic appreciation of how the night fits the horror of the deed? Is it natural? Does Lady Macbeth give any such expression to her feeling about the night? Why should the *silence* of the night bear in upon him heavier even than the darkness? If we have commonly dramatic contrast, and dramatic grouping, why may we not have dramatic separation, — such a separation as this between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth? Are we not really conscious of her, and what she is doing throughout the scene?

ACT II

Scene 2

2. quenched them: put them to sleep.

2. given me fire: is there not a vivid glimpse here of the quick and delicate fire of which her nature is made?

3. fatal bellman: the owl, as always, the bird of ill-omen. The bellman sometimes had as his duty to summon condemned persons to their doom.

6. possets: the night cup of hot milk and ale.

9. Within: just where does this mean?

13. Had he not resembled: he is Duncan, of course. What light does the speech throw upon Lady Macbeth's nature?

14. My husband: a moment of terrible mutual understanding, like that when Macbeth comes back from battle just as she has finished reading his letter. It is said that Forrest's way of acting this was to come from the king's chamber backward, with his hands dripping with blood, and, not expecting to find Lady Macbeth standing in the court, he stumbles backward against her. They both start and gaze at each other in terror as she cries "My husband!"

21. This is a sorry sight: what pulls Macbeth away from this useless contemplation of his hands?

26. There are two lodged together: why does she give so simple and matter-of-fact an explanation?

27. Amen: realizing that the word means "so be it," and implies a spiritual harmony with the words that precede it throws light upon this agony of Macbeth's.

35. Sleep no more: these three words, spoken here for the first time, echo and reëcho through the entire play.

37. Sleep that knits up: what but a half-crazed brain could so swiftly rush through a list of metaphors? Lady Macbeth's "What do you mean?" indicates she thinks she must recall him to his senses or he will go mad.

39. second course: chief course in the feast.

42. Glamis hath murdered sleep, etc.: what is the effect of Macbeth's recital of his own name?

46. Go get some water: Lady Macbeth is really in terror for fear Macbeth's mind is breaking; so, as always, she calls him back with a simple thing — "Go, get some water" — and the danger is averted. It is not her belief that water can wash away the guilt, but it *is* her belief that only a commonplace action can recall Macbeth.

47. filthy witness: the blood on his hand.

48. Why did you bring, etc.: imagine the awful moment when she realizes the dangerous thing he has done in his agitation. I do not take it that she is contemptuous of his error, but that she feels in an instant that the journey must be made again back to the king's chamber. As she knew instantly, Macbeth could not do it. There is more feeling of criticism in "Infirm of pur-

pose!" and still, I think, no real exasperation as she takes the daggers.

53. the sleeping and the dead: how well her philosophy stands by her here!

55. painted devil: it was Macbeth's own idea to make these painted devils by smearing the faces of the grooms with blood.

56. gild the faces: to gild with blood was a common expression in those days. There may be here a quibble on *guilt* and *gilt* — which would have to be ascribed to hysterical strain.

57. Knocking within: "From my boyish days I had always felt a great perplexity on one point in *Macbeth*. It was this: the knocking at the gate, which succeeds to the murder of Duncan, produced to my feelings an effect for which I never could account. The effect was, that it reflected back upon the murder a peculiar awfulness and depth of solemnity; yet, however obstinately I endeavored with my understanding to comprehend this, for many years I never could see *why* it should produce such an effect. . . . At length I solved (the problem) to my own satisfaction; and my solution is this. Murder, in ordinary cases, where the sympathy is wholly directed to the case of the murdered person, is an incident of coarse and vulgar horror; and for this reason, that it flings the interest exclusively upon the natural but ignoble instinct by which we cleave to life; an instinct, which, as being indispensable to the primal law of self-preservation, is the same in kind (though different in degree) amongst all living creatures; this instinct, therefore, because it annihilates all distinctions, and degrades the greatest of men to the level of the 'poor beetle that we tread on,' exhibits human nature in its most abject and humiliating attitude. Such an attitude would little suit the purposes of the poet. What then must he do? He must throw the interest on the murderer. Our sympathy must be with *him* (of course, I mean a sympathy of comprehension, a sympathy by which we enter into his feelings, and are made to understand them — not a sympathy of pity or approbation). In the murdered person, all strife of thought, all flux and reflux of passion and of purpose, are crushed by one overwhelming panic; the fear of instant death smites

him 'with its petrific mace.' But in the murderer, such a murderer as a poet will condescend to, there must be raging some great storm of passion, — jealousy, ambition, vengeance, hatred, — which will create a hell within him; and into this hell we are to look. In *Macbeth*, for the sake of gratifying his own enormous and teeming faculty of creation, Shakespeare has introduced two murderers, and, as usual in his hands, they are remarkably discriminated; but, though in Macbeth the strife of mind is greater than in his wife, the tiger spirit not so awake, and his feelings caught chiefly by contagion from her, — yet, as both were finally involved in the guilt of murder, the murderous mind of necessity is finally to be presumed in both. This was to be expressed; and on its own account, as well as to make it a more proportionable antagonist to the unoffending nature of their victim, 'the gracious Duncan,' and adequately to expound the 'deep damnation of his taking off,' this was to be expressed with peculiar energy. We were to be made to feel that the human nature — *i.e.* the divine nature of love and mercy, spread through the hearts of all creatures, and seldom utterly withdrawn from man — was gone, vanquished, extinct; and that the fiendish nature had taken its place. And, as this effect is marvellously accomplished in the *dialogues* and *soliloquies* themselves, so it is finally consummated by the expedient under consideration; and it is to this that I now solicit the reader's attention. If the reader has ever witnessed a wife, daughter, or sister in a fainting fit, he may chance to have observed that the most affecting moment in such a spectacle is *that* in which a sigh or a stirring announces the recommencement of suspended life. Or, if the reader has ever been present in a vast metropolis on a day when some great national idol was carried in funeral pomp to his grave, and chancing to walk near the course through which it passed, has felt powerfully, in the silence and desertion of the streets, and in the stagnation of ordinary business, the deep interest which at that moment was possessing the heart of man, — if all at once he should hear the death-like stillness broken up by the sound of wheels rattling away from the scene, and making known that the transitory vision was dis-

solved, he will be aware that at no moment was his sense of the complete suspension and pause in ordinary human concerns so full and affecting as at that moment when the suspension ceases, and the goings-on of human life are suddenly resumed. All action in any direction is best expounded, measured, and made apprehensible by reaction. Now apply this to the case of Macbeth. Here, as I have said, the retiring of the human heart, and the entrance of the fiendish heart, was to be expressed and made sensible. Another world has stept in, and the murderers are taken out of the region of human beings, human purposes, human desires. They are transfigured: Lady Macbeth is 'unsexed'; Macbeth has forgot that he was born of woman; both are conformed to the image of devils; and the world of devils is suddenly revealed. But how shall this be conveyed and made palpable? In order that a new world may step in, this world must for a time disappear. The murderers, and the murder, must be insulated, — cut off by an immeasurable gulf from the ordinary tide and succession of human affairs, — locked up and sequestered in some deep recess; we must be made sensible that the world of ordinary life is suddenly arrested, — laid asleep, tranced, — raked into a dread armistice; time must be annihilated; relation to things without abolished; and all must pass self-withdrawn into a deep syncope and suspension of earthly passion. Hence it is, that when the deed is done, when the work of darkness is made perfect, then the world of darkness passes away like a pageantry in the clouds; the knocking at the gate is heard; and it makes known audibly that the reaction has commenced; the human mind has made its reflux upon the fiendish; the pulses of life are beginning to beat again; and the re-establishment of the goings-on of the world in which we live, first makes us profoundly sensible of the awful parenthesis that had suspended them."

— De Quincey's Essay on The Knocking at the Gate in "Macbeth."

59. pluck out mine eyes: draw my eyes out of their sockets.

62. multitudinous seas: the mass of waters on this globe — the multitude of seas, wave upon wave in multitude.

62. incarnadine: change to red.

63. Making the green one red: note the two readings possible, according as the comma is put after *green*, or after *one*.

Is there any real transition here in Macbeth's thought from his hands, both hands, to the one hand that did the deed?

64. I shame to wear: notice how this declaration of hers is almost shattered by the knocking. Again she suggests the practical thing to do.

73. To know my deed: if I must face my deed, I would better lose all consciousness of myself.

74. Wake Duncan: this is a genuine wish. It reminds us of the end of the preceding scene. He is rooted to the spot, in spite of the knocking. Lady Macbeth must pull him away.

DISCUSSION

"*Macbeth* (as I have said and as others have said before me) curiously resembles Greek tragedy in a dozen ways, of which I will mention but one more.

"Though it is full of blood and images of blood, the important blood-shedding is hidden, removed from the spectator's sight. There is, to be sure, a set scene for Banquo's murder: but it can be omitted without detriment to the play, and, in fact, always is omitted. Duncan is murdered off the stage; Lady Macbeth dies off the stage; Macbeth makes his final exit fighting, to be killed off the stage. There is nothing here like the 'blood-bolter'd' culmination of *Hamlet*." — *Quiller-Couch*.

It is difficult to realize the rapidity with which events follow one another in this scene. The bell rings, Macbeth goes to answer the king, Lady Macbeth fills the stage while he is gone, confessing that she almost committed the murder with her own hands, Macbeth comes back with the daggers in his hands, she goes to replace them, the knocking threatens discovery, and continues till she hurries him away lest they be discovered. It is a wonderful concentration of dramatic interest. It is also the scene which, so far, puts Lady Macbeth to the most agonizing test. In what speeches do you feel this? What brings her closer to your sympathy and pity here? How do you think she says "He is about it"? What is the effect of Macbeth's first

cry from within, "Who 's there?" What is the significance of those incoherent whispered questions and answers when Macbeth comes back from the murder? Booth, in acting here, made as if to stab Lady Macbeth as he staggered back, as if he thought she was the one he heard in his frenzy. Both are at the moment of collapse here — what practical thing to be done saves them? Is it the consequences of the crime, or the crime itself that affects her? that affects Macbeth? Why should Macbeth complain that he cannot say "Amen" to the prayers of the grooms, as if "murder and praying" could join hand and hand in friendly companionship? Is it not like Lady Macbeth's analysis of him — "What thou wouldst highly that wouldst thou holily"? Where does Lady Macbeth have to summon her strength most to call Macbeth back to his senses? What question of hers is a fine remonstrance? Where does she most need her strength for action? Is her remorse more real already than his? How does that affect her having to force herself back with the daggers? Is there anything significant in the fact that nowhere throughout the scene does either blame the other for the terrible situation in which they find themselves? What is the climax of the whole scene? How would you proportion the impatience of the four knockings at the end of the scene? By this threatened entrance of some one from the outside world, into the very courtyard itself, the dramatic tenseness is so heightened that there can be no pause between this and the following scene. Why is it necessary, however, to break this strain?

What are the memorable speeches in this scene?

ACT II

Scene 3

The first of this scene gives just time for Macbeth and Lady Macbeth to cover up their guilt before they are called by the general alarm. It so relieves for the first time the strain which we have felt since the very beginning of the play. Whether we like or not the interruption of comedy here, we must feel

its artistic value just as we appreciate the grave diggers in "Hamlet." Macduff and Lennox were appointed to call the king "timely" and they have been kept standing outside the gate until the fifth knock, as loud and startling as they could make it. The porter, maudlin drunk from the feasting which he has not yet slept off, comes stumbling out through the dark, cold courtyard, unable at first to find the gate, then fumbling at its fastenings. The longer he is, the greater the dramatic suspense.

2. porter of hell-gate: in the old Miracle Plays which Shakespeare knew, hell-gate had a porter, called Cerberus, a kind of counterpart of St. Peter.

2. have old: have a hard old time.

19. primrose way: Shakespeare uses the phrase many times. In "Hamlet," I, 3, line 50, Ophelia remonstrates with her brother for treading "the primrose path of dalliance."

20. remember the porter: give him his fee — a fine climax of humor. He is apparently sober enough by this time.

23, 29. lie so late; call timely: these phrases raise the question as to just when the king was murdered. A little before daybreak is the criminal hour of night, the hour of deepest sleep and greatest opportunity for crime. But why run these dramatic events by the hands of a clock?

24. second cock: just as night is really giving place to day.

28. the king stirring: how does the word *stirring* affect us as Macduff speaks it?

30. I 'll bring you to him: Macbeth, now dealing with men, is wholly alert to play his part well.

32. physics: cure by physic or medicine.

34. limited service: appointed service.

35. He does, etc.: again a wavering equivocal answer like those Macbeth gave Lady Macbeth in Act I, Sc. 5.

40. combustion: conflagrations.

41. New hatched to the woeful time: events about to happen, in keeping with the woeful time, and just prophesied "with accents terrible."

41. obscure bird: mysterious, or loving the dark.

44. cannot parallel a fellow: cannot remember its equal. These details are in Holinshed's account of this very night.

50. Lord's anointed temple: cf. 2d Corinthians, VI, 16: "Ye are the temple of the living God."

54. a new Gorgon: the classic Gorgons turned those who looked upon them to stone. Who destroyed the Gorgon Medusa?

60. great doom's image: an image, or sight, as terrifying as that of the Last Judgment.

61. sprites: rise from your beds as from your graves, walking like spirits, to match the horror of this moment.

64. hideous trumpet: harshly imperious.

64. to parley: to conference.

65. O gentle Lady: knowing what we do of the part played by Lady Macbeth in the murder, we can but feel the dramatic significance of Macduff's words.

75. serious in mortality: of any great moment in this mortal life.

77. mere lees: dregs, left this vault — life — to brag of.

80. The spring, the head, etc.: again Macbeth embarks upon a string of metaphors.

83. as it seemed: does this necessarily imply any suspicion?

84. badged: blotched.

85. unwiped . . . Upon their pillows: this does seem a suspicious situation.

90. That I did kill them: how well this intelligence has been kept from us all — even from Lady Macbeth — until this moment when it could serve as the critical situation of the scene.

91. Who can be wise, etc.: again Macbeth's mind overflows with fantastic imagery.

93. expedition: haste.

101. Help me hence, ho! Now is Lady Macbeth's presence in this scene justified. Upon the first reading does the fainting seem to you real or feigned?

103. argument: this matter.

105. Hid in an auger-hole: no place, even the tiny hole bored by an auger, is too small to hold danger to our lives.

106. Let's away: how many purposes has Shakespeare in mind to serve in giving this conversation between the sons of Duncan. Is their sorrow very strong, to be so easily concealed? Or is their fear the great thing put immediately upon the foot of motion?

109. naked frailties hid: fully dressed, as there was no time to do when the "hideous trumpet" called them to parley. Might it mean "recovered our betrayed emotions"?

113. In the great hand of God I stand: this oath must be terrible to the murderers.

114. undivulged pretence: against this crime, and its inherent treason not yet come to light.

115. So all: Macbeth here hears all his friends take solemn oath against him.

116. briefly: quickly.

116. manly readiness: full dress and armor.

125. Hath not yet lighted: if one who wished the crown killed the king, he must also murder, for his purpose, the two sons of the king.

128. shift away: steal away.

DISCUSSION

This scene shows us the short period of immediate concealment, bound to come quickly, and bound — why? — to require the presence of both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Our eyes are fixed upon them and them only, the other characters are voices only to us. But for a breathing space, just for a second, we may laugh at the porter. Do you find him really amusing? Coleridge did not think Shakespeare wrote the porter scene, but allowed another's hand to insert it to appeal to the mob.

"To be brief, the Porter's speech is just such a discharge, vicarious, of the spectator's overwrought emotion; and it is quite accurately cast into low, everyday language, because that which knocks at the gate is not any dark terrific doom — for all the darkness, all the terror, is cooped within — but the sane, clear, broad, ordinary common work-a-day order of the world reas-

serting itself, and none the more relentingly for being work-a-day, and common, and ordinary, and broad, clear, sane."

— *Quiller-Couch.*

Has not Shakespeare many such a grotesque humorous character entering even his tragedies at the least expected moment? Name some of them. What do you think of the wording of Macduff's first two questions? Have you from now on any feeling of sympathy for the murdered king? Upon whom is Shakespeare turning all our sympathy? Why? Is the conversation between Macbeth and Macduff and Lennox natural? Where is Macbeth's first sign of weakening from his assured bearing? Should he, even at the beginning, be able to blot his internal horror from his face? He must not show any signs of desperation — except in his eyes. Fortunately he is talking here every moment. When before did he rather over-talk than fall short? What speech of his is most dangerously exaggerated here? What impulsive action of his has wrecked Lady Macbeth's carefully laid plan? The old acting versions used to omit Lady Macbeth's part in this scene: why was Irving keen to restore it? What are the arguments for and against her feigning a swoon when she hears it? What do you think of her first words when they say the king is murdered, — "What? in our house!" Does it sound like innocence or guilt? What dramatic action on the stage could follow the ringing of the alarum bell ordered by Macduff? Would you like a wild commotion on the stage, a confused gathering of half-dressed, dazed men, women, children — the retainers of the castle. Does Macduff impress you as genuinely horrified? Why does he give orders in Macbeth's castle? Is it too hard that Macbeth should be made by the imperious demand of Macduff to defend his killing of the grooms? Did he succeed in this defending of himself — or did Lady Macbeth accomplish that? Where is the real climax of this scene? What fills in the dramatic "let-down" and silence while Lady Macbeth is being carried out? Just how much sorrow do the sons of Duncan really feel? From a dramatic point of view why is their quick withdrawal from the action necessary? Has any one at the end of the scene

any definite idea of who killed the king? Or, as in life, is surprise too great as yet for conjecture? Is the descent of action during the dialogue of the sons too sudden? Would you to-day give the scene earlier? Where? What is the dramatic effect of an empty stage at the end of the scene?

ACT II

Scene 4

This scene might seem a useless interruption of intense tragic action, unless we remember that all through the play, beginning with the storm in Act I, Scene 1, Shakespeare is trying to establish a close affinity between spiritual and physical storm and darkness. The report of the old man here keeps close to Holinshed's version.

4. trifled: belittled.

7. travelling lamp: as a metaphor for the sun how does this appeal to us? Is there any comparison for the sun that would seem adequate? We are told that the word *lamp* was much more dignified then than now. Holinshed says that this fitful darkness and storm lasted six months.

12. towering: soaring above her prey — sighting it before she swoops down upon it.

13. mousing owl: by a mere owl used to no greater prey than mice found low upon the ground.

15. minions: the specially cared for of all of Duncan's horses.

18. eat each other: so Holinshed says.

21. see you not? Pointing to the stormy heavens.

24. pretend: intend.

24. suborned: bribed.

27. still: always.

28. Thriftless ambition, etc.: ambition that is so careless of the ultimate gains that it will devour the source of its own life.

31. Scone: the ancient residence of the Scotch monarchs, and on the famous "stone of Scone" they were crowned. The

stone was carried to Westminster Abbey by Edward I in 1296, and is now inclosed in the coronation chair there.

33. Colmekill: means the cell, or *kill* of the island St. Columba, now called Ionia, — one of the Hebrides. It was one of the earliest Christianized settlements, and a monastery and cathedral were built there. All the old monarchs of Scotland were buried there, down to Macbeth's time — but tradition says that no resting place was allowed his body there.

36. Fife: his own castle; Macduff was Thane of Fife.

38. Lest our old robes, etc.: recalls the lines spoken by Banquo in Act I, Sc. 3, line 145.

DISCUSSION

What is the dramatic value of the Old Man in this scene? Do you recall other "old men" in Shakespeare's plays? What purposes do they usually serve? Is there any symbolism in what he says of the "mousing owl" killing the falcon, and in Duncan's horses acting so against nature? In what tenor do you think all of Ross's speeches run throughout the scene? Do you find additional evidence here for seeing him as an intriguer, and now a time server, watching, for his own advantage, the course of events? Since his part must be actually acted, is it not necessary to decide just what is the bent of his nature, and the import of all his lines? What is implied in his emphasis on the word *now* in his first speech upon Macduff's entrance? What questions of his try to draw out Macduff? Is Macduff evasive in his answers? Nobly so? Which is his best answer? When he says "puts upon them suspicion of the deed" does he mean rightly so? How would you read all the *well's* in the last speeches of Ross and Macduff? What sentence of Macduff's implies that they may themselves sometimes have to face danger from Macbeth? Why will not Macduff go to Scone? Why does Ross go? Are you surprised at Macduff's refusal? What in the third scene prepared us for it? Do you think the scene of sufficient significance to be witnessed to-day in an acting version?

ACT III
Scene 1

4. stand in; stand established to thy posterity.

7. shine: Johnson's note on this word is amusingly Johnsonian: "appear with all the lustre of conspicuous truth."

Sennet sounded: a particular set of notes upon the trumpets distinct from and possibly more dignified, — often announcing royalty as here, — than the old stage direction "flourish."

Enter Macbeth, as king, etc.: this is the first time that we have seen them as king and queen. What a story may their faces ever so soon tell!

13. all-thing: altogether, in every way.

14. solemn supper: banquet of high ceremony.

15. Let your highness Command upon me: this could be *set*, etc., so as to make *command* a noun, the antecedent of *which* that follows; or *which* may refer to the idea of the entire preceding clause.

22. still hath been: always has been.

22. grave and prosperous: a moment's thought will show how well selected these words are.

26. go not my horse the better: if my horse go not better than usual. It has been suggested that Banquo thinks of his horse as running a race with the night, in which the horse may or may not prove the winner.

33. strange invention: strange tales of their own inventing.

34. cause of state: matters of government; affairs of state.

44. God be with you: to make the meter right this must be contracted almost into our present "good-by."

48. To be thus: to be king.

50. royalty: nobility of nature.

51. that which would be feared: a high-minded integrity which should be feared by me.

56. My Genius: my spirit, or soul.

57. Mark Antony's was by Cæsar: in North's "Plutarch" a soothsayer told Antony that "his fortune was altogether blemished and obscured by Cæsar's fortune." Also as in history

Antony feared Cæsar as a political rival, just so Macbeth here fears that Banquo will interfere with his kingship.

64. No son of mine: Macbeth had no children; those of whom Lady Macbeth spoke in the first act were hers by a former marriage.

65. filed: defiled.

67. rancors: bitterness.

68. mine eternal jewel: my immortal soul, or possibly as in "Othello":

> "Good name, in man and woman, dear my lord,
> Is the immediate jewel of their souls."

69. common enemy: the Evil One.

71. list: usually in the plural — lists.

72. champion me: not fight with me, in the usual sense of "champion," but be a champion against me.

two Murderers: plainly by the conversation that follows, not as yet murderers, but desperate characters ready for any crime.

80. passed in probation: passed from one point to another in the way of proof.

81. borne in hand: deluded by false promises. Cf. "Hamlet," II, 2, line 67:

> "That so his sickness, age, and impotence,
> Was falsely borne in hand."

88. so gospelled: as in the gospel of Matthew V, 44, "pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

91. We are men: we are not such saints as the gospel describes, — we are merely men, and feel these misfortunes as such.

92, 95. catalogue . . . valued file: putting the two phrases side by side instantly brings out their meaning.

96. the subtle: those especially cunning.

100. Particular addition: his own particular characteristic.

100. the bill That writes them all alike: that is, the general catalogue.

102. a station in the file: a position of distinction in the general list of men.

105. Whose: business is its antecedent.

112. tugged: handed about without respite.

116. bloody distance: in fencing this meant within such distance as could be covered by the combatants' swords.

118. near'st of life: my most vital parts.

120. avouch it: approve it to myself, and force my realm to accept it.

122. but wail: but instead I must bewail his fall.

127. Though our lives: perhaps he meant to go on and add "pay for it."

128. Your spirits: we should use the singular to-day.

129. advise: really means *instruct*.

130. the perfect spy o' the time: the person who will appear with more detailed instructions when the time comes to strike.

132. something from: some distance from.

132. always thought: always the important thing to keep in mind.

133. That I require a clearness: that no guilt appear to attach to me.

134. rubs: imperfections.

141. It is concluded: the plan is settled.

DISCUSSION

Since the third act usually contains the crisis of Shakespeare's tragedies it is absorbing here to see how Macbeth, in his every act, "winds up" quickly to its end the doom he began to bring upon himself in the murder of the second act, and even in the entertainment of temptation in the first. We feel in this act hurried up to a point whence we know a rapid and terrible descent will begin. Is there in Banquo's first speech any real longing for his oracle to come true? Is his "hush, no more" a guilty exclamation? Is it possible that one of Macbeth's fears is already come true — that he may "teach bloody instructions which return to plague the inventor"? This is the only act in the play where Shakespeare shows us the king and queen in their royal robes. Do they "sit easily"?

"Looking into the matter historically, I cannot find that the critics even began to do Lady Macbeth justice until Mrs. Siddons taught them. Johnson, for example, wrote that 'Lady Macbeth is merely detested.' An amazing judgment that seems to one who saw Ellen Terry rehearsing the part, and sat and watched John Sargent painting her, in her green robe of beetles' wings, as she stood in the act of lifting the crown to her brow!

"Exquisitely chosen moment! For reading the play carefully, let us observe how, for her, everything ends in that achievement. Up to it, hers has been the tiger nature, with every faculty glued, tense on the purpose, on the prey: her husband but a half-hearted accomplice. The end achieved, it would seem that the spring of action somehow breaks within her. It is Macbeth who, like a man, shoulders the weight of moral vengeance. *She* almost fades out. She is always the great lady; and while she can, she helps. They are both great: never one vulgar word of reproach or recrimination passes between them. But they drift apart. Macbeth no longer relies on her. Uncounselled by her, he seeks the Witches again; solitary he pursues his way; and *her* mental anguish is left to be watched by a Doctor and a Gentlewoman. It is but reported to her husband. When the wail of the waiting-women announces her death, he is busy arming himself for his doom. All he finds to say on the word 'dead' is:

> 'She should have died hereafter:
> *There* would have been a time for such a word.'"
>
> —*Quiller-Couch.*

Is there any reason why Lady Macbeth should so flatter Banquo? In the dialogue between Banquo and Macbeth take out the three short questions that Macbeth buries in his speeches, and see how clever he is in getting the information that he wants. Looking back over the scene after the first reading, what is the dramatic power of all this conversation when Banquo's doom is already sealed? Why does Macbeth wish the horses "swift and sure of foot"? Is there any reason for Macbeth's not wishing to execute this murder himself? Does Lady Macbeth know he is planning it? What is the sad summary of Macbeth's so-

liloquy beginning "To be thus is nothing"? Is there any reason, other than half-formed fear and conjecture, for the second murder? Is there, then, a reason for such a murder's bringing about at once the real crisis in Macbeth's career? How does he speak of Banquo's "wisdom that doth guide his valor to act in safety"? Has he any regret for killing Duncan? What are the most bitter lines in his entire speech? Why does he summon two murderers, and a third later, instead of committing the murder himself? Why has one interview with these men already been held? And why are they again asked to "resolve" themselves apart? Is there anything in the *pace* of this murder quite different from that of Duncan? What is the real point in all Macbeth's involved talk with the murderers? It is said that Shakespeare never introduces even a minor character without making his personality clear. Just how well do you know these two murderers? Is there a real dramatic contrast between them? Where does Macbeth boast like a king, and then crumble under his own boasting? When people use the excuse "for sundry weighty reasons" which they do not give, what do we always think? Why is Macbeth so anxious to enrage the spirits of his hired assassins? Is not their pay guaranty enough of their will to succeed? Do you think he, not Banquo, was the cause of their disasters? Where before in the play has Macbeth shown his power to play upon the emotions of others? What are his methods? Why does he conceal the real reason for killing Fleance with such a flimsy excuse? Does the couplet at the end of the scene recall at once another significant ending of a dramatic scene? In watching this scene upon the stage what would enlist your attention most? Is Lady Macbeth's appearance disappointing? It is said that Booth had his Lady Macbeth leave her ladies and go to the king and touch him when he began to talk about the "bloody cousins" and "cruel parricide" — playing the same part, to avert attention to a dangerous topic, as her swoon played for her in the second act.

ACT III

Scene 2

Notice in this short scene how Macbeth, in this interim of inactive waiting, morbidly broods with a tortured mind; and how again Lady Macbeth, in the quiet pause, is the stronger of the two.

6. that which we destroy: has Lady Macbeth here a vision of the slaughtered Duncan?

10. Using: in the sense of becoming used to; nursing continually.

13. scotched the snake: bruised and cut. The old idea was that the halves of a snake cut in two could, while the blood was fresh, be cemented, or as Macbeth says: "close and be herself" again.

16. frame of things: the universe.

16. both the worlds: heaven and earth.

21. on the torture: on the rack.

22. ecstasy: any kind of excessive emotion, sorrow as well as joy.

25. Malice domestic, foreign levy: where, in the first act, did Duncan suffer from both?

27. sleek o'er: so Milton in "Comus," "Sleeking her soft alluring locks."

32. Unsafe the while, that we: we are in the precarious condition of having to flatter him whom we fear, while we mask our real hearts.

38. nature's copy 's not eterne: the deed by which they hold their lives from Nature is not eternal, — that is, it can be ended. Therefore, they are "assailable," not immortal.

40. jocund: can you prove from your own reading that this was a common word with Shakespeare and Milton?

41. cloistered flight: stealing about the cloisters.

42. shard-borne beetle: borne on its wings, hard and scaly as shards, bits of broken pottery.

43. yawning: same atmosphere as "drowsy hums."

46. seeling night, scarf up: technical terms in falconry; the falcon's eyes were seeled, or scarfed, to keep her blinded until she was tame.

49. that great bond: Banquo's life, referring back to "nature's copy"; or it may mean the bond of his destiny as given by the witches.

53. night's black agents: do you think this means all evil of the night, or the hired murderers for the "deed of dreadful note" of this night?

56. go with me: in spirit accompany me in this next undertaking.

DISCUSSION

Considering the scene as a study in contrasts, what is the difference between Macbeth's and Lady Macbeth's remorse? What speech shows hers at its bitterest? Which one shows Macbeth's? Is there a difference too in the thing which each laments? Do you think the two are drifting apart now in their daily experience? How? How do you account for Macbeth's frequent terms of endearment when he speaks to her? Do you find any indication that she suspected Macbeth of planning some evil against Banquo after listening to him in the first scene? Some commentators believe that her speech beginning "Nought's had, all's spent" should belong to Macbeth. Do you find, however, in it something much more like her than like him? These are the only lines in the whole play, except those spoken when she is asleep, when Lady Macbeth gives voice to her grief of soul. At the end of this speech, "Things without all remedy," etc., is she expressing her own philosophy or one that she manufactures for Macbeth? Is it the only one for him? What are the two simple fears which Macbeth expresses in lines 17–19? What, as poetry, do you find to admire in that speech of his? What lines make you feel real pity for him? Does Macbeth anywhere come near revealing his new intention to Lady Macbeth? What reasons are there for his wanting to keep all knowledge of it from her until it is done? What do you think is the significance of his phrase, "Till thou applaud

the deed"? Is anguish of remorse the real base of all Macbeth's feeling, or simply fear? What speech of his seems to have *unsafe* for its key word? Which would allow him to plunge deeper into crime? When he speaks of "terrible dreams that shake us nightly," what might Lady Macbeth's stage action be? Where does she assume a forced gayety, and enjoin the same upon him? Where before has she said almost the same words to him? Does Macbeth's last speech remind you of an earlier one? What seems always to make a poet of this soldier-murderer? Mrs. Kemble has a fine note on Macbeth's picture of oncoming darkness: "We see the violet colored sky, we feel the soft intermitting wind of evening, we hear the solemn lullaby of the dark fir-forest, the homeward flight of the bird suggests the sweetest images of rest and peace, and, coupled and contrasting with the gradual falling of the dim veil of twilight over the placid face of nature, the remote horror of 'the deed of dreadful note' about to desecrate the solemn repose of the approaching night, gives to these harmonious and lovely lines a wonderful effect of mingled beauty and terror." Dowden also says that the line, "Good things of day begin to droop and drowse," is the motto of the entire tragedy which opens, he points out, with "a terrible sunset in folded clouds of blood." Is there anything in this scene to sustain the "pity" and "admiration" due to tragic heroes?

ACT III

Scene 3

This scene, so short, does not lack dramatic power. The setting, dusk in the park; the extraordinary characters; the mystery of the identity of the third murderer; the simple unsuspecting speeches of Banquo — the third, his last; the flight of Fleance and all its significance; the sudden beginning and ending — all make it terribly quick and powerful.

1. But: what is the implication in the word?

3. offices: charges, duties.

4. To the direction just: accurately, according to what we were told to expect.

5. The west yet glimmers, etc.: we cannot say here that the poetry of these lines is inspired by Macbeth's excitement. Why should not the dramatist himself feel the poetic atmosphere of a moment like this? Is it symbolic of the fact that the eve of the day really has come now for Macbeth and Lady Macbeth?

8. Hark! Notice how the tenseness begins from this moment.

9. Give us a light there: if Banquo and Fleance take the foot path, while their horses "go about," as is implied in the third murderer's next speech, he is asking one of his body servants, or Fleance himself, for a torch. Note the dramatic effect of having the torch lifted here in the darkness. Was Shakespeare afraid to bring a horse upon the stage? What would he think of the stage mechanism of the chariot race in the dramatized version of "Ben Hur"? Hobby horses were common on the stage of his day, clumsy affairs made of hoops and laths and canvas. Is it not to his credit that he disdained the cheap device which only mocked and insulted the imagination of his audience?

22. let 's away: they had no orders to pursue Fleance, — and yet if Macbeth were the third murderer, would he have allowed him to escape so easily?

DISCUSSION

Allan Park Paton, in 1869, proposed the theory that Macbeth was the third murderer. What do you think of each of his eight arguments as follows? First, that Macbeth did not appear at the banquet until midnight; second, that he enters the banquet room at almost the moment when the murderers appear; third, that he could not have the heart to be at the feast, or anywhere except upon the scene of the murder to be sure of its success; fourth, that any third murderer, Macbeth's special confidant, would have been the one to announce the result; fifth, that the "twenty trenched gashes" sound not like the telling stroke of a hireling, but the personal vindictiveness of one who hated Banquo; sixth, that the third murderer showed exact in-

timacy with the park, and with the habitual way visitors approached the palace; seventh, that there was at first a light-hearted satisfaction in Macbeth's manner with the murderer when he appears at the door of the banquet hall; eighth, when the ghost rises at the feast Macbeth says, "Thou canst not say I did it," as if the darkness had concealed him from Banquo. There is a good answer to each of these points. Can you see what they are? And, in general, what would be the effect upon the audience — that audience which Shakespeare always held so carefully in mind — if this point were an intentional mystery? What do you think of the possibility of making Ross the third murderer? Why should Banquo's death be acted before our eyes when Duncan's was not? Does this connect at all with the appearance of the ghost of Banquo later?

Are there not better reasons in the fact that it is the third murderer who recognizes Banquo and is distressed at the striking out of the torch? Take out of the lines the speeches of the third murderer, — as you read them what seems evident? Might not Macbeth, according to his nature, have found it impossible at the last moment to trust so momentous a deed to mere hirelings — and so have hurried to the park? And, if so, why go in disguise? From your own reading of Shakespeare do you personally believe that it is his way to introduce mysteries and enigmas, — or shall we read the lines simply, as he writes them?

ACT III

Scene 4

Macbeth in this scene holds the "solemn supper" which he has tried to make secure in happiness by the murder of Banquo. How quickly our minds have shifted from watching his successes to watching *for* the irony that lurks in each seeming success. Banquo is killed — a success; Fleance has escaped — the irony of fate bound up in that success. Remember that this scene is acted entirely by the fitful light of torches!

1. degrees: your ranks at a formal banquet of the realm.

2. the hearty welcome: notice how at every perfunctory reiteration of these sounds of welcome the spirit becomes more and more hollow.

3. will mingle with society: is there a practical reason for his refusing to be seated at first?

5. keeps her state: sits upon the canopied dais, the throne of state. Does this make it more difficult for Lady Macbeth later to come to the side of her lord?

8. my heart speaks: the "o'ercharged heart," but valiant one, that has all our pity even as early as this. Why can she not trust her own voice further? Can she fail in little things, and still summon her strength for the greater?

9. encounter: meet, — with bows and curtsies.

10. Both sides: both sides of the table are filled; Macbeth will sit at the head then?

11. anon: his excuse for going to the door, where possibly he has just seen the murderer.

12. There 's blood upon thy face: said with satisfaction, or with fear lest it be seen by others?

14. 'T is better thee without, etc.: is there any real difficulty in understanding this?

19. the nonpareil: the peerless one.

23. casing: incasing, enveloping.

24. cribbed: still more constricted than "cabined."

25. saucy: impertinent, not suitable.

27. twenty trenched gashes: what incident in "Julius Cæsar" does this closely parallel?

29. worm: here, the young of the serpent.

32. hear ourselves: talk together.

33. the feast is sold, etc.: her meaning is that one might as well buy a feast at a public inn as to eat at a friend's home without that friend's hearty welcome; merely to eat were best at home, — away from home the "sauce to meat" is expressed courtesy and hospitality. A wonderful speech under the circumstances.

41. Were the graced person: why is this the moment for the ghost to enter?

43. pity for mischance: how far is Macbeth "over-winding" here?

46. The table's full: just his cursory glance, and unthinking reply. Was there no place then reserved for Banquo?

46. a place reserved, sir: to whose place does Lennox point?

49. Which of you have done this? What Macbeth sees is clear enough — but the fine dramatic point is the gradual recognition that the figure in the chair is Banquo's. Do any of the others around the table see it? "It is a piece of consummate art," says Knight, "that Macbeth should see his own chair occupied by the vision of him whose presence he has just affected to desire."

50. canst not say: can it be that Macbeth is childish enough to take some comfort in the thought of the way in which he planned the murder?

52. Gentlemen, rise: whether this is a sincere speech from Ross or a veiled desire to draw Macbeth out, the real point is that to break up the feast now would send away a suspicious gathering of lords. See how Lady Macbeth immediately senses this and comes to the rescue. Too heart-weary to join in the merriment of feasting, yet she must be drawn, weary yet alert, into its horrors.

57. extend his passion: prolong his perturbation.

58. Are you a man? I can feel no taunt, no bitterness here; only in a tense, concentrated undertone an anguished attempt to call him to his senses.

59. Ay, and a bold one: his answer, too, is tense, — but tense with fear and horror.

60. proper stuff: "proper" is a term of contempt, — oh, stuff and nonsense!

63. flaws: sudden commotions.

64. Imposters: when compared with real fear.

66. Authorized by: why not take this literally — a woman's story, the author of which was her superstitious old grandmother?

69. how say you? Addressed to the ghost.

70. speak too: does this not remind you of the old arrogant Macbeth who commanded the witches to speak, in the first act?

71. If charnel-houses, etc.: do you see a reason here for believing that the first ghost may have been Duncan's, the buried Duncan; and the second one, Banquo's?

73. maws of kites: let the kites so devour the bodies of the dead that fragments can never be reassembled to come back as ghosts.

Ghost vanishes: why, at this point?

76. gentle weal: do you think "general weal" is better?

83. Than such a murder is: has Macbeth any sense of the unnaturalness of the deed he has done?

84. do lack you: miss you, their host.

85. muse at: wonder at.

86. a strange infirmity: he must mean nothing less than that of hallucinations.

90. to our dear friend Banquo: what is Macbeth again sure to bring upon himself by *this* "over-winding"?

92. all to all: one general toast so that he may be spared the strain of drinking severally to his lords.

95. speculation: natural sight.

97. a thing of custom: his natural infirmity.

99. What man dare: still to the ghost.

101. armed: armored with his thick skin and tusks.

101. Hyrcan tiger: Hyrcania, the region south of the Caspian Sea.

105. inhabit then: continue then.

106. baby of a girl: a mere puppet, or doll; or possibly the tiny body of a young girl-mother.

Ghost vanishes: what in Macbeth's speech makes it vanish?

108. sit still: what movement had arisen among the lords?

110. admired: to be wondered at.

111. overcome: come over.

112. make me strange: you make me a stranger to my own disposition.

116. What sights, my lord: does Ross sound here curious, or like a friend who would give Macbeth a chance to explain his actions?

117. speak not: why must still stronger interference from Lady Macbeth come here?

122. It will have blood: murder will have its revenge.

123. Stones have been known, etc.: old tales of stones moving away from a grave and revealing a murdered corpse; of trees telling of murder, as in Vergil's tale of the murdered Polydorus. Auguries and their understanding of the relations between causes and effects have revealed even the most secret murderer through the voice of magpies, and choughs, or jackdaws, and rooks.

127. at odds with morning: what other scene in the play has been enacted at this same time?

128. How say'st thou, that, etc.: since she did not tell him so, Macbeth must mean, "What dost thou say to the news that Macduff refuses to come to our feast?"

129. Did you send to him, sir? Can you make out any reason why she uses "sir" in speaking here to her husband?

132. I keep a servant feed: so said Holinshed — "in every nobleman's house one slie fellow or other."

132. I will to-morrow: such a desperate determination of will is likely now to bring what upon Macbeth? Have the witches ever originated anything that was not already in Macbeth's mind?

140. ere they may be scanned: they must not be examined too carefully if I am to have the courage to carry them through.

141. season of all natures: the seasoning — that which gives relish and taste to life.

143. initiate fear: the fear felt by the uninitiated in crime.

DISCUSSION

The swift action of the tragedy is most apparent in this scene. The crime; the immediate punishment; the passing to a new crime, forecast in the questionings about Macduff; the resorting to the witches, — all in one scene. Booth's acting of the scene was perfect, and yet he omitted the ghost! He arranged that the first murderer should enter inconspicuously among the servants carrying dishes, and carry a goblet of wine to Mac-

beth. Thereupon followed the quick whispered dialogue — but at the door, whither Macbeth had followed his undertone direction as he passed him the wine. Later whenever Macbeth tries to drink the wine, it sickens him. He made tenderness the tone between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth after the guests had gone. — each trying to comfort the other; at his words of brooding, "The secret'st man of blood," he had her gently place her hand upon his shoulder to call him back — to the question "What is the night?" "Come, we'll to sleep," he spoke as one voicing a forlorn hope; and at the very end of the scene, "We are yet but young in deed," he lifted his hand in weariness to his brow, and touched there the crown. As if it stung him, he removed it, held it in his hand, gazed at it, as if to seek an answer to the question why had he ever cared so much for it. Lady Macbeth sinks to her knees, her eyes averted from him, lonely in the anguish of her soul. Why is Macbeth so poetic in his speech beginning "Then comes my fit again"? Since Lady Macbeth felt keenly enough Macbeth's suspicious preoccupation, why could she not fill in the space with lively conversation with their guests? Is her part more or less difficult because she does not exactly know what has been going on? Did you realize what a gruesome setting is that of the familiar quotations "Now, good digestion wait on appetite" and "Stand not upon the order of your going"? How do you feel throughout this scene about making the third murderer to be Macbeth? Do you think it possible to act Lady Macbeth as seeing the ghost of Banquo also? It is said that Mrs. Siddons so acted it. What might have been her purpose? Why is the ghost always brought upon the stage — when the "air-drawn dagger" is not? May not the "terrible dreams," the "sorriest fancies," the "torture of the mind," the "restless ecstasy" not be enough to justify Lady Macbeth in saying, "My lord is not well"? Does she fear actual insanity for him — and does her fear give that alternation of tenderness and sternness to arouse him from sinking into a kind of madness? What actual things does Macbeth plan to do, as his way of escaping from the madness? Is there anything in the alternate vanishing and coming of the ghost

that reminds you of the fading and appearing of the dagger? Is Macbeth most vulnerable in the superstitious side of his nature? What is babyish in his complaint that ghosts should appear at all? that other murderers have committed their crimes without their victims' appearing to them? What is the mood in which he calls for wine, " Fill full "? What would the scene lack without Lady Macbeth's presence? Where during the scene does Macbeth really show that he is not constitutionally a coward? Do you think the speech beginning " What man dare " keeps up its boldness to the very end? When Lady Macbeth takes control of the scene see how Macbeth fades away, and only she and the ghost are real to us. After the guests go, Irving acted the part by throwing himself down on a seat at the table, head on arms, while Ellen Terry, as Lady Macbeth, dropped limply on to the throne at the other end of the room. Do you like this separation of the two characters, — or would you keep her closer to him for comforting him as one consoles a child? What do you think of Macbeth's philosophy, " Returning were as tedious as go o'er "? What will be the effect of this night's experiences upon Macbeth's guests? What is fine about the quick ending of the scene?

ACT III

Scene 5

See the section on material not by Shakespeare in " Macbeth," pp. 92–93, for the discussion as to the authorship of this scene.

1. Hecate: this introduction of a pagan deity among the witches, a modern superstition, has excited many comments. The most remarkable, that of Warton, who says: " The Gothic and Pagan fictions were frequently blended and incorporated. The Lady of the Lake floated in the suite of Neptune before Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth; Ariel assumes the semblance of a sea-nymph; and Hecate, by an easy association, conducts the rites of the weird sisters in *Macbeth*." We recall also Hymen in " As You Like It."

. **close contriver**: secretive planner of all those "harms" t the witches apparently questioned.

3. **Loves**: do you think the suggestion a good one that *lives* he word Shakespeare wrote?

5. **Acheron**: while we know this as the name of one of the r great rivers of Hades in Greek and Roman mythology, kespeare probably means by using it to call up some dark e or pit, deep enough to seem to reach down to the infernal ions. Perhaps it is on the heath where they meet Macbeth first time.

4. **drop profound**: that is, deep, full, ready to drop, and full iidden possibilities. There was an ancient belief, says Stee- s, that the moon, if sufficiently solicited, would shed foam on ticular herbs, full of enchantment.

6. **sleights**: one "sleight-of-hand."

2. **security**: the sense of inviolable security; over-confidence.

song within: the song is taken from the play "The Witch" Thomas Middleton. It runs as follows:

Come away, come away,
Hecate, Hecate, come away!

Iecate: I come, I come, I come, I come,
With all the speed I may,
With all the speed I may,
Where 's Stadlin?

Voice above: Here!

Iecate: Where 's Puckle?

Voice above: Here!

And Hoppo too, and Hellwain too;
We lack but you, we lack but you;
Come away, make up the count.

Iecate: I will but 'noint, and then I 'll mount.

(*A spirit like a cat descends.*)

Voice above: There 's one comes down to fetch his dues:
A kiss, a call, a sip of blood;
And why thou stay'st so long
I muse, I muse,
Since the air 's so sweet and good.

Hecate: O art thou come?
What news, what news?
Spirit: All goes still to our delight.
Either come, or else
Refuse, refuse.
Hecate: Now I 'm furnish'd for the flight.
Firestone: Hark, hark, the cat sings a brave treble in her own language.
Hecate (going up): Now I go, now I fly,
Malkin, my sweet spirit and I.
O, what a dainty pleasure 't is
To ride in the air
When the moon shines fair.
And sing and dance, and toy and kiss!
Over woods, high rocks and mountains,
Over steep towers and turrets,
We fly by night 'mongst troops of spirits;
No ring of bells to our ear sounds,
No howls of wolves, no yelps of hounds;
No, not the noise of water's breach,
Or cannon's throat our height can reach.

This song was inserted by Davenant in his acting version of "Macbeth," a great revival of interest in the play, published in 1674. In the Folio, "Music and a Song" is the direction at the 34th line of Hecate's speech; and

34. song within, "**Come away, come away**," etc., comes after line 36.

35. I am called: Hecate has evidently been taking no part in the song.

DISCUSSION

Rolfe speaks of this scene as "this poor stuff thrust into the play by some hack writer at the suggestion of some theatrical manager." Can you express why the lines seem inferior to Shakespeare's? Are there touches, too, especially in the diction, that seem unlike Shakespeare? Does the scene seem necessary? Does it, if not needed, add anything we would not wish to lose from

the play? Is it put in, perhaps, to fulfill Macbeth's announcement in the last scene that he will betimes to the witches? What might the anger of Hecate contribute to our understanding of Macbeth's relations to the supernatural? Is he already marked for her chastisement? Then does the scene increase our interest in what is to come?

ACT III

Scene 6

Before the *crisis act* of the play ends, some scene must be provided to carry our interest well along toward the falling action. Notice how the conversation of the two lords and their report of Macduff's disaffection does this perfectly. The scene is usually omitted on the stage; and it has no action; but from the philosophic point of view it cannot be omitted.

Forres. The palace: if there, how boldly now are Macbeth's subjects discussing him?

another Lord: any reason at all for not giving his name, except that he is to stand for all lords in Macbeth's kingdom?

2. interpret further: go and make clear those things as well.

3. borne: managed, conducted.

6. you may say, if 't please you: in what tone is this whole speech said?

10. fact: Shakespeare uses this in the sense of an evil deed.

12. pious: in the sense of having respect and reverence to his sovereign Duncan.

12. tear: is it intentional that we shall see Macbeth here as a raging beast?

20. so should Fleance: does this mean that suspicion of killing his father has fallen upon Fleance?

21. broad words: bold accusing speech has the honest Macduff evidently used.

22. at the tyrant's feast: how swift and sure is the connection with Scene 4.

25. holds the due of birth: withholds his due by birth.

27. pious Edward: Edward, surnamed "the Confessor." He was king of the West Saxons. Born at Islip, Oxfordshire, about 1004, he died January 5, 1066.

29. his high respect: the respect paid to him, not by him.

32. with Him above To ratify the work: does the solemnity of this remind you of any speech of Banquo's in Act II, Scene 3?

36. free honors: honors which are the due of self-respecting free subjects or possibly honors that are not bribes.

40. an absolute: an unqualified bluntness.

41. cloudy messenger: was his face purposely concealed; or was it clouded with fear of consequences; or "clouded" in that it reflected the misery of his soul in bearing such messages; or simply "ominous"?

43. clogs me: he hates to bear this answer to Macbeth, so goes back with heavy feet.

DISCUSSION

What is your great interest all through this scene? At what point is it intensified? Do you feel that this scene is placed here too early in the play, and would be better after the first scene of the fourth act? Do you believe Shakespeare could have written it in that order, and then changed it to this position in his acting version so that the two witch scenes need not come together? Where do we get a union here of inside and outside information? Is the purpose to show what is now the general opinion of Macbeth in his own kingdom, as well as in the distant kingdom of Edward? Had we almost forgotten there were kingdoms ruled with equity? Is the same kind of rebellion being plotted against Macbeth as he helped to quell when Duncan was king? In what way is this pure poetic justice? Where did Macduff first impress us as a man of stubborn integrity? Does he seem here to you strong enough to be the human agent of fate in Macbeth's downfall? Retribution from the supernatural agencies, and retribution from human agencies are put steadily in motion before Scenes 5 and 6 end. Can there be material enough here for two more acts?

ACT IV

Scene 1

It is the use of the supernatural in this scene that really lifts Macbeth out of the rôle of mere murderer into the rôle of tragic hero, for this reason: all his black crime he commits under a fatal hallucination. It is not madness, he is not lunatic; but a certain illusion, a terrible mistake, seizes upon his mind and leads him on to a sure doom. From the moment when like Milton's Satan he says, "Evil, be thou my good," he never shakes off the delusion; the stronger his will is, the more terrible will be his deeds; the stronger his imagination, the more crimes it can conceive.

Macready suggested the following arrangement of this scene: Let the Witches be placed in different parts of the cavern. Suppose one at the mouth, intently on the watch; another near the cauldron, covering over the livid flame, which, by the way, should be placed under the charmed pot and not in it; the Third Witch on the side opposite the entrance, seated perhaps on a fragment of stone, her arms folded, and rocking to and fro upon the rock, as it were, in impatience. Let not a word be spoken, till the audience have had time to study the picture. 'T is to the point, and they are sure to feel it, if you will allow them. The familiars — the brinded cat, the hedge pig, and Harpier — are supposed to be stationed outside the cavern to give notice of the approach of Hecate. The First Witch hears her familiar: "Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed." The eyes of the other Witches are instantly turned towards her; a pause ensues during which they all remain motionless. The Witch near the cauldron hears her familiar; she starts from her cowering attitude: "Thrice, and once the hedge-pig whined." Another pause here. Now at length the Third Witch springs upon her feet: "Harpier cries"; and then addressing her sisters, and not putting words into Harpier's mouth, which Shakespeare never intended for him: "'T is time, 't is time."

1. brinded: brindled, spotted, tawny.

2. thrice and once: what would be the meaning if there were a comma after *thrice?* All odd numbers are the numbers of enchantment, therefore, if the passage means *four*, the witch would say *thrice and once.*

2. hedge-pig: the hedge-hog or urchin was an animal of demonology, supposed to poison cows and wither plants; urchin also later meant a mischievous little fairy, and hence still later, a child.

3. Harpier: what is your association with the word *harpy?* Shakespeare *may* have meant something like the classic name.

4. Round about the cauldron go: where before have we had the same dance to wind up the charm?

8. Sweltered venom: poison sweated out.

10. Double, double toil and trouble: what sound is suggested by the words?

12. fenny: dwelling in the fens.

14. newt: lizard.

16. blind-worm: the poisonous slowworm. Cf. the fairies' song in "Midsummer Night's Dream," II, 2, line 11: "Newts and blind-worms do no harm."

23. Witches' mummy: it is true, but horrible, that from Egyptian mummies chemists distilled a gummy fluid, which, in Shakespeare's day, was used as a medicine.

23. gulf: gullet.

24. ravined: ravin is to devour greedily — so here over-fed with its prey.

25. hemlock: what is your classic tragic association with the word?

27. yew: poisonous to birds as well as to human beings.

28. moon's eclipse: a time of bad omen. Milton says in "Lycidas":

> "It was that fatal and perfidious bark;
> Built in the eclipse."

31. drab: a harlot, hiding her child.

32. slab: slimy, gluey.

33. chaudron: entrails.

37. baboon's: where would the accent fall here?

Music and a song: with the first two words of the song given it is not hard to identify it as Middleton's, inserted as his other passages were in Davenant's acting version:

> Black spirits and white, red spirits and gray,
> Mingle, mingle, mingle, you that mingle may!
> Titty, Tiffin,
> Keep it stiff in;
> Fire drake, Puckey,
> Make it lucky;
> Liard, Robin,
> You must bob in,
> Round, around, around, about, about!
> All ill come running in, all good keep out.

44. By the pricking: an old superstition that still holds.

48. black, and midnight hags: doing the work of darkness only; white witches were supposed to heal human diseases, while the gray practiced either good or bad arts.

53. yesty: same as yeasty, foamy.

54. navigation: ships of every kind.

55. bladed corn: young, tender, in the blade, too light generally to be laid down by tempests, and a disaster to the farmers if this happened to it before it was ripe for harvest.

59. germens: all the seeds of earth, in a large figurative sense.

65. farrow: a scarce word, meaning *litter*.

65. grease that 's sweaten, e.c.: the most awful climax possible to the list of awful things that made the ingredients of the cauldron.

68. deftly: skillfully.

an armed Head: this is symbolic of Macbeth's head cut off by Macduff and fixed upon a pole.

69. knows thy thought: an added horror in this.

70. say thou nought: keep the silence due to the incantation.

72. Enough: where before were the witches impatient of questioning?

74. harped my fear aright: struck the very note of my fear.

a bloody Child: this is symbolic of Macduff "untimely ripped from his mother's womb."

78. Had I three ears, etc.: they should all be intent to hear thee.

84. take a bond of fate: by slaying Macduff he will, apparently, get perfect surety to add to this promise of the witches.

a Child crowned: the boy Malcolm; and the tree symbolizes the wood of Birnam which he later orders his army to hew down.

88. round And top: the crown.

93. Dunsinane: where lies the accent?

95. impress: command, as to impress seamen, or provisions, etc.

99. live the lease of nature: live out his natural term of life.

106. what noise is this: may be music, — or discordant sounds. Which do you think fits the setting the better?

112. the spirit of Banquo: that is, that terrible spirit I have just seen at the banquet.

113. sear mine eye-balls: scald my eyes.

121. two-fold balls and treble sceptres: a compliment to King James: the "two-fold balls" may mean the two islands making up the kingdom, or may refer to the double coronation of James at Scone and at Westminster. "Treble sceptres" may mean England, Scotland, and Ireland or the three titles of James, "King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland."

126. amazedly: stunned.

127. sprights: spirits.

130. antic round: or did Shakespeare write "antique round"?

144. anticipat'st: preventest, in its literal meaning of *coming before*.

145. flighty: speedy, too speedy for the execution to overtake it.

147. firstlings: first born thoughts.

155. sights: apparitions from the witches.

DISCUSSION

The real turning point of the play begins here — with the second appearance of the witches — retribution is the key word from now to the end. What a challenge to a poet's imagina-

tion is the mere enumeration of the ingredients of the caldron! Which ones seem most loathsome to you? What is the effect of the onomatopoetic refrain? Does Hecate add anything to this scene? Does Scene 5, Act III, require that she should appear here? Comment upon the second witch's couplet just before Macbeth enters. In what mood is Macbeth all through this visit to the witches? What does each impassioned speech of his seem to bring forth? Which speech of his is most desperate? Why is he poet again in his picture of the destruction of all nature? What figure makes the fine climax to that speech? Where is Macbeth most imperious? How does this compare with his attitude in preceding scenes? Why must these apparitions be visible to the audience? Describe the voice suited to each as it speaks. Where during their speeches does Macbeth again exemplify that "Security is mortal's chiefest enemy"? What is artistic about the *mounting* security of the prophecies? Notice that the prophecies throughout the play come in threes, arranged in order of climax. In what question does Macbeth reveal the real fear that gnaws at his heart? What is the evident result of his anger when the apparitions do not answer this question? What is finely dramatic in the procession of kings? Why did Shakespeare avoid stating the exact number of them? Are the witches merely spiteful when they say they will cheer up his spirits? Is their phrase, "this great king," ironical? Why is he so anxious to know if Lennox saw the weird sisters? Are not the steady answers of Lennox like a refreshing dash of cold water after the fevered speeches of Macbeth? What is the dramatic value of "Macduff is fled to England"? Coleridge called these words "the acme of the avenging conscience." When Macbeth answers that he will surprise the castle of Macduff we cannot help marveling at the rapidity with which his moral nature disintegrated. Where is the awful hesitancy he felt over killing his first victim in the great soliloquy of Act I, Scene 7, and his conversation with Lady Macbeth in that scene? Is there really any necessity for these new murders, directly after the solid assurances of the witches?

ACT IV

Scene 2

At first thought this scene may seem to break the artistic unity of atmosphere that has settled down upon the tragedy. But just as a dramatic contrast, especially at its beginning, it has no equal in any of the plays. The light grace of the prattle of the boy with his mother and her woman's anxiety over the unexplained absence of her lord give us a touch of affectionate home-life which is nowhere else in the play, and which throws our minds back instantly to the thought of the destruction of such life in the home of Macbeth since " thriftless Ambition " entered there. Many critics think the scene entirely unnecessary, and a revolting " massacre of the innocents " when we have already had enough of murder. But see what point it adds later when Ross tells Macduff what has happened to his wife and babes during his absence, and to Lady Macbeth's heartbroken cry in the sleep-walking scene, " The Thane of Fife had a wife, where is she now? " Coleridge's note on the scene is: " This scene, dreadful as it is, is still a relief, because a variety, because domestic, and therefore soothing, as associated with the only real pleasure of life. The conversation between Lady Macduff and her child heightens the pathos, and is preparatory for the deep tragedy of their assassination. To the objection that Shakespeare wounds the moral sense by the unsubdued, undisguised description of the most hateful atrocity, — that he tears the feelings without mercy, and even outrages the eye itself with scenes of insupportable horror, — I . . . answer boldly in the name of Shakespeare, not guilty! "

4. Our fears do make us traitors: make us act in such a way as to be suspected of treachery.

7. his titles: those properties to which he has title.

11. Her young ones: an absolute clause, *when* her young are in the nest.

17. fits o' the season: a splendid phrase to describe the wild disorders Macbeth has set in motion. Cf. below: "Wild and violent sea."

17. dare not: it is hard to see why she could not be told Macduff had gone to England.

19. hold rumor, etc.: when our fears make us prey to every mere rumor.

22. Each way and move: does this mean simply move here and there without any direction or real headway?

30. Sirrah: used by parents to children as well as by masters to servants.

34. lime: a sticky substance smeared on trees to catch birds; possibly the word was *line* which fits in with *pitfall* and *gin*, or snare.

65. perfect: perfectly acquainted with.

67. homely: in the sense of humble, of no rank.

70. fell cruelty: murderous cruelty.

77. womanly: in the sense of womanish.

78. these faces: the hired murderers here disguised their faces, evidently in some horrible fashion.

82. shag-haired: the word is shag-ear'd in the Folio.

82. egg . . . young fry: offspring of traitors.

Exit Lady Macduff: Holinshed takes much space to describe what Shakespeare here manages with wonderful dramatic compression, — as if he had rammed the chronicle into the barrel, then shot it forth in one powerful discharge.

DISCUSSION

"The next victim, little Macduff — one of those gallant, precocious, straight-talking children in whom Shakespeare delighted — it may be because he had lost such a son, at just such an age. Be it noted how this boy is introduced close after Macbeth's purposed visit to the witches — *he* seeking *them*.

"Straight upon this foul scene in the cavern light breaks, for the last time in the drama, in the sunny wisdom of a child. Good gospel, too, as I take it —

" 'Was my father a traitor, mother?'

" 'Ay, that he was.'

" 'What *is* a traitor?'

— And so on. 'Now God help thee, poor monkey!' says his mother at length (irony again) even while the Murderer is at the gate, being admitted.

" 'Where is your husband? . . . He 's a traitor,' are the words in the Murderer's mouth.

" 'Thou liest, thou shag-haired villain,' answers up the proud, plucky boy, a moment before he is stabbed.

" All these pretty ones end tragically in Shakespeare: but surely this one in this play lives his few moments not wholly in vain."

— *Quiller-Couch.*

Do you feel that Ross is a tool of Macbeth here, or really comes of his own good heart to warn Lady Macduff? Could he have come as a spy, the forerunner of Macbeth's murderers, and then, on the spot, have found his heart melting? Yet he did not go from Lady Macduff's presence and prevent the murder: it happened within two or three minutes of his conversation with her. In his long speech what quotable lines echo a modern proverb of our own? Does Lady Macduff give a very flattering picture of Macduff? If it is natural that she should not, speaking in the mood of the moment, does what she says put us out of sympathy at all with him when his grief overtakes him? How can we account for the sharpness of wit in the young son? In whose company have his conversational powers been developed? Is there anything about the mother's questions that throws light upon the life of this boy? Why has Shakespeare made him so attractive? Is the part he plays at the very end of the scene to be expected? What influence has his gallant care for his mother's safety upon our sensibilities? He is perhaps five years old, yet he downs his terror at the masked faces and threatening daggers of the murderers. Is Shakespeare overdrawing nature here? Why is the messenger made too soft-hearted to do aught but warn them? How long would it be possible for Macbeth to find such instruments for carrying out his crimes?

Do you think it at all likely that this messenger could have been sent by Lady Macbeth? How complete an understanding do you get of Lady Macduff from her speeches? from Ross's to her? from the messenger's to her? How had she learned the philosophy in her speech beginning, "Whither should I fly?" Where do you most admire her spirit? Would you prefer this scene should be omitted? There is a scene at the end of Act V that will throw your memory back instantly to the beauty, although terrible beauty, of this scene. How much more pleasure, then, in reading the play twice, or twice twenty times!

ACT IV

Scene 3

There is now no dramatic thread of any strength in the play except the great avenging of the foul deed of Scene 2. In the natural course of events time must elapse before that can come; word of his loss must reach Macduff in England; and possibly the dramatist may feel that Malcolm is too shadowy a character, so far, to warrant any interest in him — and, indeed, he does not win it even at the end, when he is crowned. More than that, Shakespeare, the workman, knew that the dénouement must not be too sudden. So we have this long conversation between Malcolm and Macduff, so long, so tedious, so ludicrous in its design on Malcolm's part, that we feel much more like condemning it as the work of a bungling hack than any of Middleton's (?) scenes. Malcolm's very first speech is of that dull, gray color he always suggests. Weeping "our sad bosoms empty" seems hardly the battle cry of a man! With what artist's sense of values this prince has been subordinated to the real hero of the tragedy!

3. mortal: from your own observation in this play alone how does Shakespeare ordinarily use this word?

4. birthdom: birthright.

6. Strike heaven on the face: recall Macbeth's words in Act I, Scene 7, lines 21–25.

7. with Scotland: in reading place the emphasis on *with*.

15. You may deserve: his enmity may light upon you even because you are befriending me.

15. wisdom To offer: something is omitted here. We may supply *wisdom it were to offer*, or *I think it wisdom to offer*.

16. innocent lamb: meaning, of course, himself. Here begins Malcolm's attempt to test Macduff by making it seem impossible, in every way, that he should be king. So doing, he will find out how strongly Macduff wishes the old line of succession back upon the throne.

19. recoil In an imperial charge: may change when authority comes into his hands.

21. cannot transpose: my suspicions cannot change.

23. Though all things foul, etc.: though foul things may try to look fair, yet fair things are still unmistakable, genuinely fair.

24. lost my hopes: the patriotic Macduff has been hoping great things of Duncan's son.

25. even there: does he mean that he, too, has "lost his hopes" in Macduff? If so, why? Evidently the next lines mean because he has left wife and children unguarded.

26. rawness: unseemly rush.

27. motives: movers of conduct, as all we love must be.

29. jealousies: suspicions.

34. affeered: the title of tyranny seems to be secure.

43. England: meaning King Edward, as kings often give to each other the name of their countries.

47. Shall have more vices: one critic, Chambers, has the most human comment upon this speech. He says: "I think there is a touch of deeper psychological insight in this (than a trial of Macduff's patriotism). Is it not true that in the critical moments of life one is often suddenly oppressed with a sense of one's own weaknesses, and dormant, if not actual, tendencies to evil, which seem to cry aloud for expression, confession?"

49. What should he be? Who should he be, or may he be?

55. confineless: without confines, boundaries.

57–59. bloody, malicious, etc.: what are the seven deadly sins?

59. Sudden: violent.

62. continent impediments: restraining motives.

68. Convey: manage artfully.

69. hoodwink: blind, a term from falconry.

71. affection: nature.

72. stanchless: insatiable.

80. summer-seeming: think about this phrase a moment; its meaning, its wonderful condensation.

81. sword of our slain kings: also a wonderful phrase!

82. foisons: plentiful harvests.

83. mere own: only your own.

83. portable: may be carried, may be endured.

85. king-becoming graces: was Shakespeare complimenting his king, James I, there?

90. In the division: in my power to enact each crime many different ways.

93. confound All unity: here his words begin to smack certainly of insincerity, of some design.

97. No, not to live: these words, I believe, give us more admiration for Macbeth than any others he speaks.

101. interdiction: excommunication.

105. Died every day she lived: every day mortified her flesh.

112. these trains: these lines.

113. plucks me: keeps me from being too confident in men.

129. at a point: ready.

130. goodness: success.

131. warranted quarrel: warrantable because valuable in its outcome; *quarrel*, simply *difference*, or *discussion*.

136. stay his cure: wait for his healing.

136. convinces The great assay: overcomes every great attempt of the medical art to cure.

140. The Evil: this is only Shakespeare's attempt, as a loyal subject, to compliment the curative powers of Edward the Confessor, the "divine touch" credited to all good sovereigns. We recall that even as late as the middle of the eighteenth century, Dr. Johnson was "touched" by Queen Anne for "the evil," scrofula.

143. solicits: prays to, and works with, heaven.

146. mere: utter, as often in the plays.

147. golden stamp: a stamped gold piece. It is said that the coin used by King James was an "angel-noble." Later kings had special coins stamped for the purpose.

148. holy prayers: at first this prayer was printed on a single sheet; later it was incorporated in the Prayer Book.

154. My countryman: from his dress he is recognized.

157. means that makes us strangers: the woes, crimes.

164. modern ecstasy: everyday course of hysterical emotion. The Greek word for ecstasy means "insanity." *Modern* here is a disparaging, belittling term.

167. Dying or ere they sicken: they are killed so suddenly they know not there is any malevolence afoot toward them.

167. relation Too nice: account too exact, too true.

169. hiss the speaker: for telling stale news.

171. Why, well: read this and the two replies by Ross that follow in the light of "there is no way to break bad news gently."

176. heavily borne: carried with genuine grief.

177. were out: were in arms.

188. would be: should be, are only fit to be, etc.

189. latch them: fasten them, capture them.

190. fee-grief: a personal sorrow.

200. quarry: game killed.

206. must be: was destined to be.

213. Dispute it: contend, fight with it.

227. If he 'scape, Heaven forgive him too: this seems to mean that I could let him escape only if I forgave him for some unknown cause; if he goes from me, still a felon, Heaven must forgive him.

230. lack is nothing but our leave: all we lack is to take leave.

232. Put on: start to work their instruments.

DISCUSSION

What additional impressions of Malcolm do we get in this scene? Is he "his father's son"? What speech of Malcolm's early in the scene sounds to you like pretentious sanctity?

Just where do you really begin to suspect an ulterior motive in all he says? Does this strange proving of the integrity of Malcolm contrasted with the blackness of Macbeth give you any definite feeling for, or against, Macbeth? Should Macbeth's successor, for the purpose of the tragedy, be a stronger or weaker character than himself? Why did Shakespeare choose to model Macduff, rather than Malcolm, as the avenger of Macbeth? What speeches of Macduff's express sincere grief here? How greatly may a loyal subject be disappointed in the young heir to his country's throne? Where is Macduff most manly? Does he, in contrast to Macbeth, put real worth or reputation the higher? Where is Macduff most the heartbroken patriot? Is there anything peculiarly Scottish in this dialogue between him and Malcolm? Which speech of Malcolm's really has both poetry and passion? Is Macduff's reply to that speech affecting? Why did Shakespeare introduce the story of the king's act of healing? In how far is the account of the king used as a contrast for both Duncan and Macbeth? What is powerful, because natural, in the way in which Ross breaks the tragic news to Macduff, and the way in which Macduff takes it? What action of Macduff's is most indicative of the depths of his grief? Why "must" Macduff "be from hence"? Why could he not have told this duty to Lady Macduff? What is affecting in his speech "He has no children!" and "I must also feel it like a man"? What pathos in "I cannot but remember such things were that were most precious to me," — which is really the deep cause of all lasting grief. Does Malcolm anywhere in the scene prove himself a tolerable king? Do you really feel any artistic need of a scene as long as this in this act? Is it true, perhaps, that later drama found it difficult to keep to the classic five acts, so far as actual material of interest is concerned? Does Macduff really need this personal motive to sharpen his enmity against Macbeth? Should he, or should Malcolm, have the last speech in this scene? Speaking very frankly, from the point of view of dramatic construction, what is your feeling about this scene, and its length?

ACT V

Scene 1

The change from verse to prose, when this last great act begins, stirs us profoundly. The preceding act has just closed in a rush and tumult of grief and frenzied vows of vengeance — a tumult that lifted even Malcolm to heights of poetry. This opens with the quiet intense thrill that close and awed intimacy gives. The kindly doctor, who, from his two nights' watching, knows that Lady Macbeth " more needs the divine than the physician," the devoted lady-in-waiting, locking in her troubled heart the words she has heard night after night from her sleeping mistress, their whispered consultations, as Lady Macbeth walks by them with her lifted taper, and the smothered heart-broken exclamations of the guilt-oppressed soul, incoherent but pitifully revealing, make material in itself so affecting that it needs no grandeur of verse to heighten it. It is a piece of that perfect prose that often tempts critics to debate whether, after all, prose is not a higher form of speech than poetry. We feel ourselves, as we read, standing in the presence of some great power, that moves the feet and hands and lips of the guilty one without her knowledge, telling us things that we have no human right to know. To be a listener at such a confessional in that quiet room at night is enough to stop our breathing. Never has woman been so defenseless! How quickly we go back to Macbeth's old cry, " Sleep no more," in the second act!

1. two nights: evidently poor Lady Macbeth did not suffer these awful " perturbations of nature " without some nights of respite between. Macbeth has called the doctor in to watch and cure her of the " thick-coming fancies that keep her from her rest," and his first speech to the maid implies that he has been told what to expect.

4. went into the field: there is much discussion over the apparent contradictions in the places where Shakespeare has placed his hero. Plainly he and Lady Macbeth are besieged in the castle that is the " trap " situation of the entire act. Yet may not Macbeth find it necessary to " go into the field " some short

distance, perchance, to see his fortifications, to place the few men who are still fighting on his side, to get his own soldier-eye on the situation of his battle ground? "The English power are near," not yet on the scene. And, from a purely dramatic point of view, how much more powerful is this scene with Lady Macbeth alone, — as if with the support of her lord gone from sight, she were doubly assailed by her terror. In such moments of remorse as have unnerved him, he has always had her ready wit or her affectionate solicitude to rely upon — she has nothing. She is absolutely alone, in another world from that in which the doctor and attendant move.

10. effects of watching: the actions one performs when awake.

20. stand close: stand back, close against the wall of the room possibly.

25. their sense: their power of seeing.

37. none can call, etc.: as king and queen none can question what we do.

45. Go to, go to: not so much scorn or reproach, I think, as surprised grief at what he gathers from Lady Macbeth's words.

49. smell of the blood: might not this easily have been the one point about the blood on her hands that clung to her awful memory of the murder — to smell for the first time warm human blood of one's own shedding — what could be more terrorizing?

52. sorely charged: heavily oppressed.

55. dignity of the whole body: for the dignity of being queen.

56. Well, well, well: how else can even his professional mind express its surprise and its helplessness?

58. yet I have known, etc.: the gentle heart of the doctor would grasp at the merest possibility of seeing all this, and yet not taking it as proof positive of the queen's guilt.

64. Even so: every speech of hers reveals a new certainty of guilt, and makes it harder not to condemn.

74. God forgive us all: this speech is perfect warrant that the doctor feels deeply awed by what he has seen and heard.

75. annoyance: doing herself harm, — a stronger meaning than the word has with us to-day.

77. mated: checkmated, — utterly stopped its motion.

DISCUSSION

Is it like Macbeth's unthinking practicality to call in a doctor to cure an ill like this sleep walking? Were the former nights that Macbeth had seen, or that the lady-in-waiting had witnessed, anything as compared with this? What evidence have we that they could not have been? Much of the power of the scene depends upon the way in which Shakespeare makes every one of Lady Macbeth's ravings bring back vividly to us the great moments of all the preceding scenes. In the folding and writing upon paper what letter has she in mind? Why should that letter have made strong enough impression upon her to mark the beginnings of her nightly ravings? Why does she rub her hands, and what is the spot she cannot rub away? What bell does she hear when she says: "One, two; why then 't is time to do't"? Who before said, "Hell is murky," and when? What moment is called up by "a soldier and afeared"? Who is the "old man"? Where was the "starting" that marred all? When did she order Macbeth to wash his hands and put on his nightgown? What awful night is in her mind when she says Banquo "cannot come out on 's grave"; when she says "there 's knocking at the gate"? Why should she suffer over the death of Lady Macduff — since she knew nothing of, and took no part in, that murder? Notice how all the important evidence comes out in her own words, "old man," "Thane of Fife," "Banquo." In what tone of voice does she speak throughout the scene? How does one move who is walking in sleep? When we remember that people in their sleep walk safely in most perilous places — edges of roofs, for instance — would there be any need of her groping her way with one hand, or holding her candle uncertainly, or going aimlessly from one part of the room to another? There is decision and surety in all she whispers and does, — and yet all the agitation, fear, shakings, gaspings that betray that gentle woman's nature she had so abused. Why are her three "Oh's" most difficult to read with the right expression? What should they convey? What did they evidently convey to the doctor, from his speech which follows? Is the Lady Mac-

beth of this scene consistent with the Lady Macbeth of the second scene of the second act? Do you feel that the lady-in-waiting is wholly sympathetic and loyal? Why do both she and the doctor say that they " will not report " and " shall not speak " of what they have seen? Is the doctor's taking down of what he hears of any significance? Why is the washing of her hands the continued action of the whole scene? When had she said " a little water clears us of the deed "? What new evidence of her fine sensibilities do you find in this scene? Is there any reason why the last speech of the doctor should change to verse? Do you yourself find it as lofty or powerful as the preceding prose? Did the poet mean this to be a scene in which two people should merely discover the perpetrators of those crimes that had shaken the kingdom, or in which a human soul should unconsciously bare itself, defenseless, to night and darkness? Why should there be any doctor or waiting-woman in the scene? What must be their feeling toward the sufferer if the perfect unity of the scene is to be maintained? Is our feeling for Lady Macbeth changed by this scene? Just why is it the one great scene in Shakespeare that challenges all the powers of a great actress?

ACT V

Scene 2

The alternation of the many short scenes, first in the castle, then outside, helps wonderfully in accumulating an atmosphere of great confusion and " time growing shorter and shorter " as we move toward the final conflict.

2. uncle Siward: Malcolm's mother's brother.

3. dear causes: close, personal causes.

4. the bleeding: deeds of blood.

5. mortified: the man dead to all feeling.

10. unrough youths: smooth-faced lads.

15. distempered cause: disorganized body of subjects.

18. minutely revolts: revolts every minute.

18. faith-breach: his usurpation of Duncan's crown.

23. pestered senses: entangled, encumbered feelings.

24. all that is within him: all the evil in him condemns itself for being in one who was once an honorable soul.

26. truly owed: to Malcolm.

27. the medicine: him, the person, who is to cure our country, — Malcolm, again.

28. purge: process of being cured by medicine.

DISCUSSION

Notice that these are not Malcolm's soldiers who speak in this scene, but soldiers just in the act of deserting Macbeth to meet and join Malcolm's army. What artistic purpose does this arrangement well serve? Can you tell yet whether you echo heartily all that they say in disparagement of Macbeth, or have you still sympathy for him? What does the poet show us in Macbeth, even now, that those actually with him do not see? Why is Macbeth so sure still that he is right to keep still in Dunsinane and let the enemy make the attack? How has Shakespeare twice refreshed our memories with the mention of "Birnam wood"? What condition of the kingdom do these men picture for us? What epithet do they apply to Macbeth? What former speeches in the play come into your mind as you read "Hang loose about him like a giant's robe upon a dwarfish thief"? When had they seen Macbeth's "pestered senses" "recoil and start"? What thrill comes with the words, "Well, march we on"?

ACT V

Scene 3

We have not seen Macbeth since he last went to the witches, and in a mood of arrogant desperation vowed to "give to th' edge o' the sword" Macduff's wife and babes. And yet we have not been conscious that the play has moved forward without his presence, so much has he become the subject of expressed abhorrence, the tyrant whose sole name blistered the tongues

of every character who has been upon the stage, except Lady Macbeth. So does dramatic law deal with the daily course of events. What does his implicit trust in the prophecy of the witches signify to us as we listen to his first words?

1. reports: of the desertion of his own soldiers.

3. taint: show a shade of fear.

5. consequences: events that follow events, — in the literal Latin meaning of the word.

8. epicures: there is no doubt what a Scotchman means when he calls an Englishman an epicure; but Dr. Johnson's note here is interesting. He says: "The reproach of epicurism is nothing more than a natural invective uttered by an inhabitant of a barren country against those who have more opportunities of luxury."

9. I sway by: I rule my motions by.

10. sag: be weighed down.

11. cream-faced loon: the pallor of fear on the boy's face throws Macbeth into a panic of fear that expresses itself in angry irritation.

15. lily-livered boy: it was the belief that a coward's liver was white.

15. patch: fools may have been so called first from the patched and mottled garments that they wore. Puck calls Bottom's players "a crew of patches, rude mechanicals."

16. linen cheeks: in "Henry V," Act II, Scene 2, line 74, Shakespeare says, "Their cheeks are paper."

17. counsellors: they counsel all who see them to fear.

19. Seyton! Notice how many times Macbeth calls his servant during this speech, and how the querulousness of his voice would increase.

20. This push Will cheer me ever: several authorities agree that *cheer* should be *chair*, to correlate with *disseat*, and to mean insure my security on my throne. *This push* means, of course, this action set in motion by the coming of the English army.

30. gracious pleasure: is required only by ceremony; *gracious* is a strange word, otherwise, for the king's tone in calling Seyton, his armor bearer.

35. skirr: scour the country, we would say.

42. written troubles: engraved deep upon an agonized conscience.

43. oblivious: causing oblivion.

44. stuffed bosom: the "o'er fraught heart," as Malcolm described Macduff's in IV, 3.

52. pristine health: its former health — before what events?

59. bane: ruin.

DISCUSSION

How can you account for Macbeth's unshaken confidence still in the prophecies of the witches? Considering, again, the way in which he jumps at the entering servant and speaks to him, do you think he really does confide in them as much as he says? Is it natural that his temper should fly into shreds at the look on the servant's face? Is the boy's fear because the enemy are at hand, or because he must carry that news to the king? How would Macbeth's tone change in "Take thy face hence"? In his speech beginning "I am sick at heart," what speech earlier in the play is echoed? Why is Macbeth always enumerating risks and losses, as he has done all through the play? Can he never face the consequences of his acts like a man? Is there real pathos, too, in this speech? What line seems most pitiful to you? What is the effect of this cry from his heart, while he is three times calling to his armor bearer? What is his instant change in mood when Seyton brings in his armor? Why will he get into it before there is need of doing so? What is the effect just here of the doctor's report of Lady Macbeth? How would you have the doctor look at Macbeth in speaking to him? Is Macbeth's cry to him one of impatience or real longing for help? Is his language too poetic here? Having thrown "physic to the dogs" is it natural that Macbeth should again begin to cry for his armor? What is his tone in "Doctor, the thanes fly from me"? Why does Seyton linger? Has Macbeth's impatience gotten him into his armor wrong, when he says "Pull 't off"? How natural his action is here as a matter of human conduct — each irritable moment bringing another still more so, until in

despair he tells Seyton to bring the armor after him! Does his "I will not be afraid of death and bane" mean that he really is afraid? What great difference is there between Lady Macbeth when completely unnerved, as we have just seen her, and Macbeth in the same state? To which belongs the greater dignity of action and expression? Was this to be expected from the beginning of the play? Is the doctor conscious of this difference? Does he seem the same man here as he did when watching Lady Macbeth? Are any of Macbeth's subjects now natural in his presence?

ACT V

Scene 4

Irving in his acting version of "Macbeth" says that he has the invading army seen approaching Dunsinane by moonlight, thereby carrying out Holinshed's narrative: "Malcolme following hastilie after Makbeth, came the night before the battell unto Birrnane wood."

2. chambers: refers to the murder of their father.

3. wood of Birnam: twelve miles from Dunsinane.

4. hew him down a bough: this is no twisting of probability on Shakespeare's part to perfect the construction of his play; old records are full of instances when armies concealed their numbers in this way. The question arises, then, could the prophecy of the witches afford such security to Macbeth's mind as we modern readers feel in it?

10. setting down: beginning the siege.

11. advantage to be given, etc.: wherever advantageous offers were made to Macbeth's soldiers they revolted from him, great and small.

14. Let our just censures, etc.: Let us suspend our judgments until the outcome of the battle is determined, and in the meanwhile let us fight like good soldiers.

18. What we shall say we have and what we owe: what we have rightful title to, and what we loyally owe to our king.

19. Thoughts speculative, etc.: all our speculation until the battle is over can be only uncertain.

20. strokes must arbitrate: strokes, and not words, will decide the issue.

DISCUSSION

Is Malcolm in his first speech still harping upon the theme of his personal safety, as he was in the first act? What is the dramatic action in Siward's first speech, and Malcolm's direction to his soldiers? Have the witches cast enough spell upon us that we, too, find we have been trusting to their oracles? What is signified by Siward's "confident tyrant"? Was Macbeth confident when we last saw him? What fine description is here of "constrained" service? Is there anything fatal in the sound of the words "due decision"? Is Macduff's note of *acting* in distinction here to Macbeth's note of *waiting* in exaggerated security? Why is not Malcolm *ever* made attractive to us? Do Macduff and old Siward really fight for him, or for their "bleeding country"? Does Macduff or Malcolm appear the real leader of the army?

ACT V

Scene 5

Watch here for the dramatic effect of disaster *before* Macbeth in the approach of Malcolm's army, and disaster *behind* him in the castle in the "cry of women." Has he not every right to say "she should have died hereafter"? Yet there is wonderful almost deathless, spirit in Macbeth's opening speech.

5. forced with: reinforced with.

10. cooled: we speak of marrow *freezing* in bones, as a result of horror.

11. To hear a night-shriek: how clearly this speech of Macbeth's expresses for us the quality of that cry of women!

11. fell of hair: literally, *fell* is skin, with hair upon it.

12. dismal treatise: tale of horrors.

13. supped full: does this, whether with the poet's intention or not, bring back to us one particular supper of horrors?

15. Cannot once start me: what a career of crime this signifies! Recalling how every "noise appalled" him in the murder of Duncan, what a long way has he traveled to this moment when "direness cannot start" him! Was he tortured by apparitions after the murder of Macduff's family?

16. is dead: what heavy, ominous fatality in those two monosyllables!

17. She should have died: just what does this mean to you,—that she *should* have died when there was time to mourn for her, or that she *would* have died some day, so why not to-day, since the days go on creeping in an endless procession that leads but to our graves?

23. dusty death: dust to dust.

24. a poor player That struts and frets: how perfect a characterization is this of the part Macbeth has played!

Enter a Messenger: Shakespeare has surely accustomed us in this play to start ourselves at every entrance of every messenger. Count up these dramatic entrances!

40. cling thee: shrivel thee, or string thee.

42. pull in: pall in, or weaken in.

43. equivocation: double speaking.

43. of the fiend: has Macbeth used the word *fiend* before in speaking of the witches?

44. lies like truth: the perfect definition of equivocation.

50. estate o' the world were now undone: when did Macbeth dare nature to utter destruction ere he would give up hearing all he could from the witches?

51. Ring the alarum bell: do you think this might be a stage direction printed by mistake as part of Macbeth's speech? Notice the directions for "alarums" that follow.

51. wrack: the old word for wreck.

52. harness: armor.

DISCUSSION

Is Macbeth's mood in his opening speech of this scene one in which we have seen him often in the play? How would this "cry of women" sound? What would Macbeth's stage action

be upon hearing it? Do you think he really knows the meaning of the noise? What is its effect upon Seyton? How would Seyton's manner have changed when he comes back to give his report? Do you appreciate the value of having Macbeth alone during Seyton's absence? Along what line of thought does his mind revert to the past? Is he now less a victim to his imagination than he was? Is this part of the tragedy of his career? He used to argue that all his visions came because he was yet young in crime — was he right? Could Lady Macbeth ever have hardened as he confesses he has? Is it possible for the mind to be so desolated that it cannot react upon any outward stimulus? Do you feel it is right, from the dramatic point of view, that Lady Macbeth should die here, so that the utter loneliness of Macbeth at the end shall be appalling? Do you not here begin that feeling of intense pity for him which makes you admire his last fight, and his fall, as a good soldier? Is there not a touching wistfulness for the proper time for " such a word " as the queen's death that he might give her the honor due her, that he might fittingly, with reverence, take time to mourn her properly? And then he recollects that some one dies every day, always has, always will, and that he should have been schooled long ago to meet this in his own experience. It is said that Salvini, in his acting, made a very appealing pause, after the first " to-morrow " — what would that suggest? In just what connection here does he speak of all men as " fools "? Does " brief candle " mean his life, or Lady Macbeth's? Is " shadows " a good term to describe actors? How many passages can you quote where Shakespeare has used the metaphor of the stage to describe life? Is Macbeth's treatment of the messenger here more or less impatient than in Scene 3? What is the accumulation of disaster upon Macbeth here? From the arrogance of security, to what mood has Macbeth passed in the last speech of the scene? Does that draw him nearer to his tragic end, or was the former attitude better for that? How do you interpret the lines, " I gin to be aweary of the sun, And wish the estate o' the world were now undone" ? Is there anything to admire in his last speech?

ACT V

Scene 6

Notice through this short scene how Malcolm's assurance, in such sharp contrast to Macbeth's mood at the end of the preceding scene, seems to bring the final catastrophe close upon the king with one great leap.

2. show: appear.

4. first battle: first line of attack.

6. our order: as agreed upon by us.

DISCUSSION

Is this scene worth staging in a modern presentation of the play? Can you see two definite points Shakespeare intended the scene to convey to us? What do you think would justify the attention he has been drawing upon old Siward and his son? Is there any point in the Siwards, father and son, fighting in one line, and Macduff and Malcolm together in another? Is Macduff rightfully given the last speech of the scene?

ACT V

Scene 7

The keynote of this scene is still Macbeth's desperate reliance upon the witches. The battle has evidently progressed far enough for him to realize that he is defeated, — but cut off from all chance for flight. His first speech is breathless from the hard fighting — on the rough field in and about clumps of furze, in hand-to-hand encounters with one after another of those deserters many of whose faces must have once been friendly to him. Perhaps no greater punishment could come to Macbeth, who was the darling of all soldiers in the beginning of the play, than his consciousness that before them all now he wavers, a defeated and broken soldier-king.

2. fight the course: the language of bear-baiting. The bear was tied to a stake, and tormented (baited) by the dogs; and each round of attack was called a "course."

16. still: ever.

17. whose arms Are hired: how much in regard to the raising of the king's army is here suggested by one touch?

20. undeeded: unused.

22. bruited: noised, indicated.

24. gently: without any stubborn resistance.

24. rendered: surrendered.

29. strike beside us: side by side, instead of *against us;* or, possibly, try to strike one side of us so as to miss us.

29. Enter, sir, the castle: The castle having been surrendered, the gates can be entered without further fighting.

DISCUSSION

What is Shakespeare's purpose in allowing his hero this one last success in killing Siward? How would it affect his reliance upon the prophecy? Do you think it strange that, since Birnam wood has now come to Dunsinane, Macbeth should trust the witches further? Knight's comment upon this line is: "the gambler who has lost thousands still believes that his last guinea will redeem them, and that the last of a long series of perishing delusions is as firmly trusted as if the great teacher, Time, had taught nothing." Does the unequal fight and Siward's boy-like courage remind you of any other scene in the play? How would Macbeth speak, "My name's Macbeth"? Should the fight between them be a long and stubborn one, or a short easy victory for Macbeth? How would Macbeth stand as he speaks the last lines of the scene? Why has Macduff left the line to seek out Macbeth alone? What phrase shows the deep incentive of his determination that it shall be his own sword that strikes down Macbeth? How picturesque are his words that suggest his searching with sheathed sword, fighting with no one, unless he may find Macbeth! Where in his speech does he stop to listen? Can you see his fiery leap on "Let me find him, fortune!" Are you sympathetic now with him or with Macbeth? What significance has the news of the surrender of the castle in the dramatic position of Macbeth at the end of this scene?

ACT V

Scene 8

Evidently from his first speech, Macbeth now knows that his castle is surrendered; and yet, like all habitually invincible soldiers, he scorns to die in any other way than by fighting to the last.

1. play the Roman fool: such self-destruction as we know was the noble Roman fashion, — Cato, Brutus, Cassius, Mark Antony are all examples.

8. terms: mere words.

9. intrenchant: the air cannot be permanently cut by a sword.

12. must not yield: do not need to yield.

14. angel: bad angel here, or demon.

14. still: always, invariably.

16. Untimely ripped: Vergil says that children who were brought to birth in this manner were sacred to Apollo, and so could not be killed in battle.

18. better part of man: the greater part of any manly courage.

26. Painted upon a pole: as animals were labeled in a show.

29. baited: hectored, worried, as in V, 7, line 2.

36. go off: a euphemism for *die*.

42. unshrinking station: position from which he did not shrink.

48. sons, hairs: do you think this could have been intended for one of those Elizabethan puns, like Lady Macbeth's *gild* and *guilt* in II, 2, line 57?

49. fairer: more honorable.

With Macbeth's head: as Holinshed reported it. This gives light on Macduff's speech in the preceding lines 23–27.

56. kingdom's pearl: does he mean the loyal men about him, or the round of pearls usually set in a king's crown?

65. planted newly: newly planned to fit the time.

74. each one: the final word of the line, *one*, was often pronounced then to rhyme with atone, alone; so here it is a perfect rhyme for Scone, and gives the right strong ending to the scene.

DISCUSSION

Can you think of any possible disaster that has not come upon Macbeth that could place him in more desperate loneliness than when he first speaks in this scene? Does he now want to escape death, or simply to die fighting? Why is it consistent that he should fight to the end? If Lady Macbeth has taken her own life, what dramatic purpose is served by making Macbeth choose differently here? Why is it more dramatic that Macduff should approach Macbeth from behind, — and yet call Macbeth to turn before he would strike him? What pause is there before Macbeth speaks? How would his voice change in his first words? What is the full significance of Macduff's "I have no words"? Imagine this fight as a long, desperate, uncertain one — each man fighting for all that meant life to him. There are pauses for breath. Macduff forces Macbeth to his knees, — finally Macbeth almost faints backward and yet feebly and uncertainly strikes upward at Macduff. Never does he yield in spirit. As they fight they go closer and closer to the edge of the stage, and we do not actually see the final stroke that kills Macbeth. We know he is vanquished by the alarums that indicate a sharp change in the fight. Why did Shakespeare arrange this so? From one speech does it seem that one short moment of success comes to Macbeth in this fight? Where is it? Why is it dramatically so planned? Is there anything poetically menacing in the very sound of the words "untimely ripped"? Upon whom falls Macbeth's strongest curse on hearing them? Why does he refuse to fight further at first; then what thought brings him back with renewed spirit? What pathos in this speech of his, lines 17–22? Many actors have objected to playing through to the end of the scene; where do you think they would place the real climax? Is there any argument for giving the entire scene? Are the two reasons Macbeth gives for not yielding consistent with his line of thinking throughout the play? How would his voice sound at the end of his last speech? Considering it as his last speech in the entire play, is it adequately significant of his fate? Of course some actors

change the lines and represent Macbeth dying on the stage; does not Shakespeare's own arrangement emphasize more the loneliness of Macbeth? Why have we this touching tribute from Ross to Siward's son? Does the tenseness of the tragedy need the relief of tears here? Is there any reminder here of the Spartan mothers' parting words to their sons, "Come back with your shields or on them"? Is Siward's speech "He 's worth no more" too cold for a father; is Shakespeare perhaps making us feel strongly the patriot in contrast to the usurper? Do you think Ross is still a time-server? Is there any point in having Macduff alone hail Malcolm as king, and then desire the others to join him? What lines in Malcolm's last speech remind you of speeches of Duncan's in Act I? What do you think of the characterization of the king and queen in line 69? Does the theory of Lady Macbeth's death satisfy you? Do you like Shakespeare's epilogues in other plays? In this? Has the play ended with as great a degree of tragedy as you would expect? How would you compare it with "Hamlet" in this respect? Have you any feeling that Shakespeare may not have written the last part of this final scene? Where do you feel the end of his hand? Thinking backward, what seems now the full significance of Macbeth's very first speech in the play: "So foul and fair a day I have not seen"? Is there anything you wish to know left unanswered by the end of the last scene? Did you really wish to know anything after Macbeth's death? If all that follows is merely conventional, why should Shakespeare have held to a convention so inferior to his own sense of the dramatic?

SUBJECTS FOR ORAL AND WRITTEN COMPOSITION

[Other subjects for themes can be drawn from suggestions in the notes on each scene. Subjects marked with a star (*) are taken from college entrance examinations of recent years. Be sure to use freely in the themes quotations from the text of the play.]

1. The Dramatic Power of the Opening Scene of "Macbeth."

[The notes on this scene give many suggestions for this; but try, first of all, to describe the effect the scene produces upon you as you read it, or as you think it would affect one who sees it acted.]

2. The Ambition of Lord and Lady Macbeth in the Years preceding the Death of Duncan.

[Combine here what you know of actual history with the mere suggestions you find in the text of Acts I and II.]

3. The Dramatic Contrast between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth during the Period of Great Temptation.

[Follow this through only as far as the actual murder of Duncan.]

4. The Dramatic Contrast between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth during the Perpetration of their First Crime.

[Follow this through the murder of Duncan only.]

5. The Dramatic Contrast between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth in the Period of Immediate Concealment.

[Let this cover only the time of the discovery of Duncan's death.]

6. The Dramatic Contrast between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth during the Prolonged Period of Concealment.

[Let this cover all the time of the play to the fifth act.]

7. The Dramatic Contrast between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth during the Period of Downfall and Death.

[Let this cover the entire fifth act.]

8. Subjects 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, especially if they have been taken separately for oral composition, can be combined into one long theme on: The Dramatic Contrast between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

9. The History of Macbeth's Ambition.

[This may be divided into three parts: the rise of his ambition; its career; its downfall.]

10. Qualities in Macbeth that Mark Him for a Tragic Death.

11. The Dramatic Possibilities of the Drunken Porter Scene.

[Discuss here the setting of this scene, its atmosphere, its contrast with what precedes and what follows; why it appealed so strongly to Elizabethans; whether or not it should be omitted in modern acting.]

12. Why Our Sympathy Is with Macbeth and Not with His Victims throughout the Play.

[Discuss here, by way of contrast with Macbeth, the lack of dramatic qualities in Duncan, Banquo, and Macduff.]

13. The Dramatic Climax of "Macbeth."

[Point out the dramatic qualities of the setting of the scene, the spirit of Macbeth in his last fight, the spirit of Macduff, the length and fierceness of their hand to hand fight, its final outcome.]

14. The Attitude of the Witches throughout "Macbeth."

[Trace the changes in their feelings toward Macbeth, accounting for each, and its effect upon him.]

15. Humorous Scenes in "Macbeth."

[Discuss especially the quality of their humor compared with humorous passages in other plays you know, and their fitness here.]

16. Minor Characters in "Macbeth."

[Are they essential to the play? what do they add to it? are they human beings or lay figures? are they varied or monotonous?]

17. Who Was the Third Murderer?

[Give all the reasons for and against its being Macbeth, and state your own personal opinion.]

18. How Does Macbeth's Tragedy Differ from Shylock's?

[Consider here the difference between the two characters, their careers, their temptations, their retributions.]

19. "Nought 's had, all 's spent."

[Picture the mind and heart of Lady Macbeth as she speaks these words.]

20. Memorable Passages in "Macbeth."

[Are these merely quotable lines? or dramatic speeches? or both? What lines are known to every one although their settings may be forgotten? Compare with "Hamlet" and "The Merchant of Venice" as to the number of quotable lines.]

21. The Most Thrilling Scene of "Macbeth."

[Having made your choice, describe what about the scene appeals to the outward senses, to our emotions, to our imagination.]

22. Dramatic Night Scenes in "Macbeth."

23. "Macbeth does murder sleep."

24. Womanly Strength and Womanly Weakness in Lady Macbeth.

25. Dramatic Noises in "Macbeth."

[Battle, storms, animal cries, alarums, knockings, calls from sleep, cries of mourning, clatter of hoofs, sword play, etc.]

26. The Most Severe Demand upon the Will of Lady Macbeth.

[Show how her will is her perfect servant while the strain exacts it.]

27. The Ghost of Banquo.

[Would you represent it, or not? Why does it alternately appear and disappear? Compare as an apparition with the "air-drawn dagger."]

28. The Weird Sisters.

[Discuss their appearance, their influence upon the hero, their equivocations, their punishments.]

29. The Fatality in Macbeth's Taking Double Assurance of Fate.

30. Parts of "Macbeth" That Have No Dramatic Value.

[Discuss why they are in the play.]

31. The Sleep-walking Scene.

[Discuss this from the point of view of acting.]

32. Birnam Wood.

33. False Points in Macbeth's Philosophy of Life.

34. The Tragic Loneliness of Macbeth in Act V.

35. Show how the outcome of some tragedy of Shakespeare is determined by the character of the hero.*

36. Select the hero of some drama you have studied; mention the qualities that distinguish him, and refer to incidents in the plot that bring each of these into prominence.*

Subjects for Composition.

37. Mention a drama in which the supernatural plays a significant part. Comment specifically on the influence of this element upon character and plot.*

38. Show that a tragedy of Shakespeare represents a conflict between opposing forces.*

39. Show that the tragedy in some Shakespeare play that you have read consists not merely in death, but also in mental suffering, moral weakening, and defeated purpose.*

40. In a Shakespeare tragedy the hero is usually called upon to make a momentous decision which is to affect his future action. Illustrate this from any tragedy of Shakespeare's which you have read, stating the question at issue, and showing what influences determine the hero's decision. How does the hero's character affect his decision?*

41. How does Macbeth suffer for his crime otherwise than by meeting death at the hands of Macduff?*

42. Does Macbeth gain or lose in promptness of resolve and capacity for crime as the play progresses?*

43. Lady Macbeth's Madness.*

44. Discuss the changes in Lady Macbeth's character between the time when she receives her husband's letter and the time when she sits at the table and he sees the ghost.*

45. A great critic has described the ideal hero of a tragedy as a man "who is not eminently good and just, yet whose misfortune is brought about not by vice and depravity but by some error or frailty. He must be one who is highly renowned and prosperous." With this definition in mind, discuss one of Shakespeare's heroes.*

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